

# THE FORTNIGHTLY

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## THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

BY D. W. BROGAN

"IT is the most uncertain election I have ever known." The speaker was a veteran journalist but his opinion is that of others, of many others in all classes and in all occupations. The opinion was put a little too strongly; the election of 1936 is not any more uncertain than the election of 1916, when (as to-day) a Democratic President was attempting to be re-elected in face of a rejuvenated and, at any rate, formally reunited Republican party.

That the election should be doubtful at all is the first surprising phenomenon. In Europe Mr. Roosevelt's name leads all the rest as far as American politics go. And not only in Europe. There is in politics, on either side, no American comparable to him in popular appeal. Some of this appeal is due to the fact that he is President. The American people has a great reverence for this office, and its holder, whatever his personal limitations, gets the limelight automatically. What he says and does is always news; his actions, his words may be disliked; they may do him harm; but they cannot be ignored.

There are great political advantages in being President of the United States. Mr. Roosevelt knows this; his enemies know this. They resent it, but even if he would, President Roosevelt could not divest himself of those advantages. There is no evidence that if he could he would, or any reason why he should. The American system is monarchical; it concentrates power, responsibility, and publicity on one man. Candidate Roosevelt is that man.

But apart from the official assets which he knows how to use so adroitly, Mr. Roosevelt has great personal advantages that are his own. He has a gift for telling phrases that is of immense



value in a country which, as Mr. Mencken recently reminded us, is rhetorically-minded beyond any European country except possibly contemporary Germany. When he was regarded merely as an elegant auxiliary of "Al" Smith, Mr. Roosevelt found the perfect phrase for his leader. "Al" was the "Happy Warrior." It mattered little whether or no Mr. Roosevelt invented the phrase or had it supplied him. When he was a presidential candidate he again rang the bell with "the forgotten man." By what channels Wordsworth and William Graham Sumner were tapped for Mr. Roosevelt's use is unimportant. The politically relevant fact is that Mr. Roosevelt can be relied on for a felicitous turn of words that will reinforce his argument or save him from the necessity of making one. Mr. Roosevelt is the most uniformly successful handler of the English tongue in active political life. He can do all that Mr. Baldwin can do at his best and a great deal of what Mr. Lloyd George can do at his best.

But Mr. Roosevelt has another immense advantage. He is the perfect radio performer. He has the voice. Warm without being oily, sincere without being too unctuous or serious, he can talk to millions as if each were his sole listener and as if the one object of the speech were to remove the last lingering doubts from the mind of Elmer Ridgeway or Herman Gross. The only political performer comparable to him in America is Father Coughlin—and Father Coughlin never lets down; is always the crusader. The priest can do the organ note as well as the President, perhaps better, but he can't manage the violin obbligato or the oboe. There is no instrument that the President can't play well; most of them he can play superbly—and he is his own Toscanini. He decides when the flute solo is called for and when the full force of all the orchestra.

All this the Republicans and the dissident Democrats admit and deplore. "It looks as though we're going to elect a good radio performer over a statesman." So I was told in a dreary tone by a politician whose hopes were not allowed to drown his judgment. No one, not even the modest Republican candidate himself, believes that Governor Landon can compete with Mr. Roosevelt as the radio Orpheus who with his lute can charm the wild voters out of their holes.



Governor Landon is a better speaker than he was two months ago ; he is a much better speaker than he was two years ago ; but then, two years ago he was one of the worst speakers in American politics. The Republicans have to deal with the marked rhetorical inferiority of their candidate and they are taking the best way out. They contrast the " plain, honest, capable executive " with the " flash, eloquent, untrustworthy charlatan." They stress the differences between the candidates and rejoice, publicly at least, that Mr. Landon is as unlike Mr. Roosevelt as possible. They are banking, that is to say, on hostility to Roosevelt rather than on loyalty to Landon. They appeal implicitly to the electors to vote against the President rather than positively for the Governor.

This policy, if not very ambitious, is probably the wisest thing they could do, for the Republicans have been troubled by more than the radio superiority of their opponent. They have to fight grave internal dissension in their party. All American parties are bound to be uneasy coalitions of sections with little but the party names in common. The size of the country, the diversity of its social and economic traditions and interests makes this inevitable. The strength of the Republican party in the past has been its successful alliance of the Western farmer and the Eastern industrialist. In that alliance (until recently) it has seemed to outsiders that the farmer got the shadow of sentimental gratification and the Eastern industrialist the bone of economic advantage. If the Republicans hope to recover their old supremacy, they must re-knit the bonds that were being strained by the disastrous relative fall in farm prices that began in the post-war years and were snapped by the final collapse of farm prices under Mr. Hoover.

How is this to be done ? It is not easy to see a way out that will satisfy both sections of the party. To the Eastern industrialist, the whole policy of crop restriction, of federal subsidies for agriculture is anathema. It is interfering with " the laws of Nature and of Nature's God," a proceeding whose blasphemous character any Eastern Republican feels deeply when it is not being done for his benefit. But to the Western farmer it is not so horrid. He has begun to suspect that corresponding adjustments have been made before for others ; he sees no reason why



they should not be made for him. He may not have liked the crop restrictions of the administration. His religious feelings may have been profoundly hurt by the destruction of food (of this I have been vehemently assured by a very eminent Republican). Even his cheques from the federal government may not have stilled the voice of conscience. But he is convinced that the Roosevelt administration meant to do real good to the farmers. He is convinced that neither the Coolidge nor the Hoover administration ever did more than try to lull his discontents asleep by bedtime stories. Thus the Roosevelt administration starts with a great advantage in courting the farm vote. That vote is normally Republican, but then the chief agent of Roosevelt farm policy, Mr. Wallace, the Secretary of Agriculture, was himself a Republican. (His father held the same office in the Harding Cabinet.) A party that is good enough for Harry Wallace is good enough for many other Western Republicans. Even that bugbear of the Eastern conservatives, the handsome and daring Assistant-Secretary, Professor Tugwell, type of the detested brain-trusters, is less unpopular with the farmers with whom he deals than he is with the indignant clubmen of the East whose hearts are bleeding for the husbandmen persecuted by the professors.

What have the Republicans to set against this? They have money, prestige and the abundant help offered by the blunders of the administration. They have money. They have always had money, much more money than the Democrats have ever had. Except in the campaign of 1928 when the wetness of Al Smith appealed to thirsty millionaires and his religion appealed to wealthy Catholics, the Democrats have had to get along on a meagre budget. The horn of plenty was always opened for the Republicans; the Democrats have had only odd drippings of that oil that works the political machine, cash. This year from normal political resources they will have less than ever. The very rich Democrats in general sympathize with the Al Smith Democrats, the so-called "Jeffersonian Democrats" who regard President Roosevelt as a man who has jumped a claim or as an impostor who has sold under a national trade mark different and inferior goods to those the old customers had a right to expect. These Democrats may not spend much money on the



Jeffersonian party. Many of them are likely to help the Republicans, to spend money where it will do real good, in the election campaign for Mr. Landon. Most of those who do not subscribe to the Republican fund will help, indirectly, by not subscribing to the Democratic party funds. They will thus ease their consciences ; they will not be aiding the other party ; they will not be helping the dangerous radical in the White House ; they will also be saving some money, which is a minor but not negligible point.

What have the Democrats to set against this ? Plenty, say the Republicans. The hundreds of millions, the thousands of millions, spent by the federal government in public works, in direct relief, make a party fund unnecessary. A party chief who has the Treasury at his disposal need not worry about a falling-off in campaign contributions. Nor is there any reason, the critics go on to say, to suspect that the President's campaign manager will hesitate to use federal funds for this purpose. That manager the Postmaster-General, Mr. James Aloysius Farley, is a politician first, last and all the time. Whether he knows or cares anything about the social purposes of the administration is doubtful. But what is certain is that he is devoted to the President ; that he is always ready to " take the rap," to shelter his chief from blame, and to do willingly and efficiently those political jobs which, if not exactly dirty, are apt to raise a little dust. It is not asserted or believed that Mr. Farley is not perfectly honest ; what is asserted and believed is that he takes a political view of all these matters and that he hates to think of a federal dollar being spent that does not do the administration any political good. The thought of its doing the opposite party any good is intolerable. Many federal projects do the administration no good but many do it lots of political good. They win doubtful voters. They soothe irritated party workers. They make party management easy. Not only federal but state patronage is in Democratic hands with few exceptions. The Republicans have been kept on short commons and it is believed that money has had to be poured into rusty machinery which had become useless since the old machine tenders have had to go out and work for a living. Mr. Hamilton, Governor Landon's manager, has worked with great energy, if not always with tact, to get the wheels running again, but there



are ominous noises that suggest an absence of sweetness in the engines and, at times, they are so loud as to raise fears that some driving belts have snapped altogether.

Apart from his control of jobs (and many thousands of them are new jobs) Mr. Farley and the administration have the advantage of unemployment relief. The chief, almost the only definite public pronouncements of the Republican candidate have been directed to promising a reduction in the costs of government especially in the cost of relief of unemployment. There are times when the Republican party seems to be trying to persuade the country that it will cut the cost of relief without depriving any individual voter of anything he has been getting. But the Republicans will have to choose and they will choose to antagonize the unemployed. That means, of course, that millions of votes will be cast for Roosevelt as the man who in the past has helped the poor and will continue to do so.

Republicans are producing large quantities of moral indignation at such tactics, but for two generations they have campaigned on the basis of cash benefits. The recipients were different, but at bottom they managed to avoid all talk of "political" issues by concentrating on what the Grand Old Party did, had done and would do to make money plentiful. In the name of this policy, fantastic tariffs were voted and wealth directly or indirectly diverted from its "normal" course. It's the same old story and it's one not told only in America. If that is doubted, what odds would a prudent party man give in an East Anglian constituency against a Communist who stood for Parliament on a ticket including an even more generous present of other people's money to the wheat growers, against a candidate, Conservative in all matters, but a supporter of a government that intended to stop the wheat subsidy?

It seems, then, as if the cash resources of the attackers and the governmental resources of the defenders will more or less cancel out. But the Republicans have prestige. They have for long been the normal government of the country; over a great part of the Union they have the habit of command. Theirs was the party that offered a career to an ambitious young man; so they had what French politicians call the "cadres." The leaders of the party, too, were men of substance or friends of



men of substance. Democratic bosses, like Mr. Pendergast of Kansas City, were "mere politicians." Republican bosses like Mr. J. Henry Roraback of Connecticut were "statesmen and gentlemen." To many a respectable American, the thought of voting the Democratic ticket was too horrid to be contemplated. It was contemplated and done by millions in 1932, but of those millions many are anxious to be back on the range. If most of them have gone back, the Democrats will have a hard time. But have they?

It is hard to believe that they have. If one listened only to hard-shell Republicans or to zealous newspaper enemies of the New Deal, one would get the impression that the Roosevelt landslide of 1932 was solely due to Mr. Charlie Michelson, the chief of the Democratic party press bureau. He attempted to "smear" Mr. Hoover. He succeeded. He did a good publicity job, but it is hard to believe that had he never existed, Mr. Hoover would have done much better. It did not need Mr. Michelson to tell a man who had lost his job, whose savings had gone with the closing of the fine marble and gold local bank, headed by a man who had ballyhooed for Hoover and prosperity in 1928, that something was wrong. His empty stomach, his weary feet, his wife and children told him that. It may not have been Mr. Hoover's fault, or the fault of his party, but Mr. Hoover and his party had been too successful in inculcating the idea that prosperity and depression were the work of governments.

In Miami, in the Union League Clubs, the dark Hoover days may be forgotten and, if they are remembered, it may be asserted that their darkness was exaggerated and that the dawn had turned the famous corner by the summer of 1932. The man in the street does not believe it.

Yet the old prestige of the ruling party may help; as business improves men forget their past sorrows and listen more eagerly to a party which promises not yet two cars in every garage, but a new model of one reliable make—if only "business isn't harassed."

How far these arguments are going it is impossible to say. But it may be questioned if they are going so far as Republican wishful thinking hopes and believes. Few Republicans with



whom I have talked were at all easy at the news that Mr. Hoover was going to speak for Mr. Landon, though Mr. Hoover is now a much better speaker than Mr. Landon is and has been one of the most effective assailants of the New Deal. That's all fine and dandy, but party men feel that an act of oblivion for all that went on between 1929 and 1933 is what the party needs. "Back to Coolidge," that's all right, but back to Hoover! The voter will say "God forbid."

"Back to Coolidge" is a slogan that Eastern Republicans think is a winner. In many regions it will be; that golden age of the twenties glows in middle-aged memories as do the days of the "Good Queen" in many British minds. But both Queen Victoria and Mr. Coolidge are dead; so are their eras. The American man in the street does not share the simple faith of Colonel Frank Knox, the Republican vice-presidential candidate, who is indefatigably condemning all that was done from 1933 on. There were many workers and many farmers who found the Coolidge era no golden age. There are many more who think that it will never return. It was a stream-lined express; very beautiful and very fast, but it got badly smashed for want of brakes in 1929 and the American voter is waiting to hear what brakes the Republicans advocate.

Such a demand for information puts the attacking party in a hole. Its Eastern leaders and paymasters think one little ornamental bicycle brake is enough with perhaps a few promises to "bust trusts" in the manner of the elder Roosevelt. But to win the doubtful voter more will be required. There will have to be more brakes and more bumpers.

For not all that the New Deal has done is wrong in the eyes of good party men west of the Alleghany Mountains or below the income level of \$5,000 a year. To the farmer, the memory of federal cheques is more grateful than the memory of Coolidge sermons. To small investors who were plundered by financial magnates, the regulation of the activities of the New York Stock Exchange does not seem blasphemous. To working men who are coming to believe that in organization lies their only safety in an age in which the ascent of the ladder of industry is harder and harder, the solicitude of the wealthy Republicans for the victim of "regimentation" is a little trying.



To sum up this situation. Mr. Landon is going to find it hard to carry states where the farmers and workers are dominant and militant, unless he gives positive assurances that would chill the enthusiasm for his cause that is felt in the East. If Landon is merely to be a milder Roosevelt, there are magnates who won't be bothered to do much to elect him, and if they think that he is not going to be elected anyway, they may feel that they might as well make peace with Mr. Roosevelt as far as they can, or at any rate a truce—until 1940.

It is considerations like these that make one sceptical of Mr. Walter Lippmann's presentation of the case for Mr. Landon as a case for a "National Government." Mr. Landon might, probably would, play the role of Mr. Baldwin sincerely and successfully as far as in him lay. But how far is that? No one can say, but there are doubts in many breasts of the conversion of the Grand Old Party. If it is beaten now, it may have to undergo a major operation. At present, its Eastern members regard the Landon candidacy as merely face lifting. If they are wrong and Mr. Landon is elected and Mr. Lippmann turns out to be right, there will be a hot time in the old town. The late Huey Long used to assure his followers that Mr. Roosevelt "had done a Ramsay on them." If Mr. Landon should "do a Baldwin" on Colonel Knox or Senator Steiwer, even a vocabulary equal to Huey's might be overstrained.

There remains one other Republican asset, the mistakes of the administration. These are numerous. The President is ready to try anything once and some of the things he has tried—the silver purchase scheme that added to China's misery, the Warren gold control scheme—have proved to be expensive mistakes. The vast expenditure has been accompanied by less graft than one would have anticipated, but by a great deal of waste. The administration has not only tried foolish panaceas, it has tried different and inconsistent panaceas at the same time. Thus, after reading an able speech by Mr. Ogden Mills (Mr. Hoover's Secretary of the Treasury) or an able pamphlet by Mr. James Warburg, all but the most partisan Democrat might well have his moments of doubt. But if he wishes to console himself, he has only to contemplate the Republican policy. A vast increase in exports, the practical prohibition of imports, collection of



the war debts and some kind of a gold standard that redresses the wrong of the gold devaluation of 1933 without depressing prices—that is the Republican policy as advocated at hundreds of meetings. The naïve horror of imports preached into the American consciousness for two generations, when the United States was a debtor country, is now stirred up when she is the greatest creditor power in the world. One of the few achievements of the Roosevelt régime that independent critics have generally admired, the negotiation of trade treaties, is virulently attacked. Great business interests know better than this. I know one virulently hostile business man in New York who has already been converted to semi-tolerance of the administration by the sobering thought that if the loudly proclaimed Republican policy is put into effect, his importing business is going to have a hard time. But this will not intimidate the orators, and the American people will, in all probability, have to choose in economic policy between two sets of panaceas, one old, one new. Which is the less relevant to the situation it is hard to say.

What, then, can beat the Democrats? One issue that seemed full of dynamite for them a year ago is now highly unexplosive. The successive Supreme Court decisions invalidating New Deal acts did the administration harm, for they made it seem ludicrous and, if it fought back, the American people was more likely to “rally round the constitution” than round the President. But the decision invalidating the minimum wage laws of New York put the Republicans in a hole, for it blew up the “states’ rights” fortress in which that party had incongruously taken refuge. They had argued that federal activity of the Roosevelt type was unnecessary; that the states could do all that was needed. The Court denied this and politically, at least, was as kind to the administration as it had been harsh in its earlier decisions, for the Republicans have been forced to talk of amending the constitution and so cannot attack the President for irreverence towards that sacred text.

Another faint hope has been stressed by Mr. Frank Kent, the famous political journalist. He has again and again suggested that the Solid South may be alienated from the President by the successful cultivation of the Negro vote in the North. A



million votes that used to be safely Republican have been transferred to the Democrats, and in states like New York and Illinois, these black Democrats may be decisive. There have been protests. Senator Smith of South Carolina left the Democratic Convention in a rage when a Negro minister was called on to pray for that body. But Senator Smith's importance is confined to his own state. It is not very great there. Governor Tallmage of Georgia ran for the Senate on a campaign bitterly hostile to Mr. Roosevelt and his supporters stressed the charge of "nigger lover" addressed to Mr. Roosevelt and to his wife. Yet Governor Tallmage, the most plausible imitation of Huey Long in the nation, was badly beaten by a loyal Roosevelt supporter. I have met no politician who shares Mr. Kent's hopes. The Republican party has enlisted the help of the Olympic champion, Jesse Owens, but despite that, hundreds of thousands of Negroes are going to desert the party that freed their grandfathers for the party that put the present generation's economic casualties on relief.

Much more serious than the Negro question is the power of Father Coughlin. In a cave of Adullam that has few rivals for the incongruity of its members, the radio orator has gathered supporters of Huey Long, the disciples of Dr. Townsend (who want a pension of 200 dollars a month for all old people), the members of his own League for Social Justice and some disgruntled left wing farmers' leaders. This body (if it is a body) has nominated Congressman Lemke of North Dakota for President. But the nominal leader is neglected by all; the real interest is concentrated on Father Coughlin. His listeners are still numbered by millions. How many votes will he take from Roosevelt in November? Not all his votes will come from the Democrats, but in the great industrial states they will be drawn from sections that otherwise would vote for the President. Most important of all, Father Coughlin will take thousands of Irish-Americans away from the Democrats, almost as great a feat as the Democratic capture of Negroes from the Republicans. He may take enough to elect Mr. Landon by making it impossible for the President to carry, say, Ohio. Each state votes as a unit and Mr. Roosevelt might have immense majorities in many states and a total majority of millions over Mr. Landon, and



yet be defeated if the Republican candidate carries the big industrial states even by the narrowest margin. This possibility keeps Eastern Democratic managers awake at night, and so does the potentiality of the Spanish situation doing the kind of harm to Mr. Roosevelt that the Irish situation in 1920 did to Wilson and Governor Cox. The administration is neutral in the diplomatic sphere ; but it is known that the sympathies of the Ambassador and of many leading Democrats are strongly anti-Fascist. But if the Republicans can persuade hesitating Catholics to vote against an administration that has sent to Spain " a friend of church burners " and to Mexico a " friend of church closers," they may defeat Mr. Roosevelt. If, as seems likely, the contests in the great industrial states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois are close, General Franco may fail to overthrow President Azaña and yet help to defeat President Roosevelt.

Yet it seems at the moment unlikely. The Democrats will probably elect Mr. Roosevelt ; they may actually gain a few Senate seats ; they will probably keep a majority in the Lower House, though it will be smaller than the present overwhelming one. But it is never safe to prophesy unless you know. No one knows, and in a year that has seen the defeat of Joe Louis and has produced the first real threat to the Senate seat of Senator Borah since he was elected nearly thirty years ago, anything may happen, even the election of Governor Landon.



## SOCIAL AND OTHER CREDIT IN ALBERTA

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

THE Province of Alberta consists of a stretch of territory that descends from the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains out on to the great plains watered by the Saskatchewan and Peace Rivers. In area a quarter of a million square miles, it exceeds all German-speaking Europe—Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Its population of three-quarters of a million would just make one first-class European city.

The whole province seems more or less bedded on minerals and oil. No one yet knows how great may be the latent resources of Alberta, how usable the coal of its foothills, the natural gas of its valleys, the oil buried below its plains. But in the general sense there is no doubt of the vastness of its unused heritage. If the Social Credit theory is based on the collective rights of the people to their common heritage, it is well grounded in Alberta.

The climate of the province is humane. There is bitter cold, hard and piercing and dry, fit to split the thermometer, but it is tempered by the soft spring wind and the early rains that blow from beyond the mountains, and wipe away the snows with the April tears of repentance.

Till the Canadian Pacific Railway woke the West from silence, Alberta was a part of the vast, romantic and unknown West. Lieutenant Butler (Sir William Butler) crossed it in 1871, as Mungo Park might have crossed Africa. Its emptiness was inconceivable. "One may wander," he wrote, "five hundred miles without seeing a human being or an animal larger than a wolf."

With the railway the West opened up. With the twentieth century it opened wide up. Here was a country where agriculture moved on a chequer-board, where ten-horse teams hauled ten-furrowed ploughs in fields so big that they disappeared over the horizon; a country where wheat was threshed



before it was cut, bound before it could move a straw, poured in and out of elevators before it was even dry. "The Granary of the Empire, Free Homes for Millions, God bless the Royal Family"—so ran the legend of the arch at the Diamond Jubilee of 1897. After the turn of the century all the world poured in—Germans, Ukrainians, a polyglot multitude mixed with an "American invasion," that moved from the deserted farms of Kansas like Mormons on the march.

Thus grew Alberta, or rather thus was it raised like a circus tent in the shouting years before the War. Hand in hand with Saskatchewan it became a province in 1905, and from then until the Great War all was prosperity, advance, confidence, with a braggart sense of unlimited greatness still to come. For years after, the situation was full of hope and confidence. The census of 1921 showed a population of 588,000, with two twin rising cities, Calgary and Edmonton, of about 60,000 each. The province shared to the full in the delusive hope of Empire Settlement, of tidal immigration, of an unlimited world market for wheat. The bonded debt stood in 1919 at only 34,000,000 dollars. Municipalities borrowed with ease in double-handfuls and paid on the nail in gold in New York.

But with each successive year the clouds gathered. Immigration slackened and dried up at the source. Without immigration the railways could not function. Empty town-sites with miles of new side-walks looked out over empty sidings and empty sheds. The frame was too big for the picture. It fell out. And with that, economic nationalism all over the world began to put up the shutters on its shops. Wheat grown in enormous quantities (the Canadian crop of 1928 was over half-a-billion bushels) found no market, crashed in price and brought down with it the grain industry of Western Canada. It was then fully realized for the first time how one-sided is the economic structure of the West. In older Canada, the pioneer lived on his own: he settled depression with an axe, was his own butcher and baker and what he had not got he went without. His diversion was whisky at 50 cents a gallon, and fighting in a tavern. As a motor car he had a buck-board and for a radio he talked to himself in the barnyard. Economically you might hit him hard, but you could not knock him out. But in the new West all



was different. Farming had run overwhelmingly to one specialized industry, raising wheat on vast flat plains where machinery came into its own. The farmer no longer fed himself, never saw a hen and had for his barnyard a corrugated-iron grain elevator.

Under such conditions an economic gulf opened up to separate western from eastern Canadian. The West was overwhelmingly agricultural and rural : manufactures it had none : but it lived on the export trade of grain. On this basis originated, even in the years of settlement and prosperity, the "agrarianism" of the Canadian West as clashing with the "capitalism" of the Canadian East. As the country grew, money centred in the East. The banks with one small exception were all there. The great industrial corporations interlocked their directorates and their dinner-parties in Montreal. To the western eye, looking angrily over the rim of the prairies, the banks and the manufacturers and the protective tariff and the railroad and the Ottawa government all merged into one distorted image—the East.

The chasm thus opened by agrarianism was no doubt widened to some extent by the racial divergence of the population from that of older Canada. Its composition shows the terrific effects of the migration of 1896-1914. The French who once aspired to rule the West, whose half-bred brothers (the Métis) were the first settlers, who saw in the little towers of St. Boniface a new metropolis of their race—the French are nowhere. Their 28,000 are outnumbered by the 63,000 Germans and outclassed by the 60,000 Ukrainians. Alberta has 461,000 people whose mother-tongue is English (including "American") and 270,000 whose mother-tongue is something else.

So naturally the West, thus economically situated even in its prosperity, clamoured for a lower tariff, for open trade, for people's money, people's telephones, a people's railway, and above all people's control of grain. The West would applaud any expenditure on railways to the Hudson's Bay, to the Northern Pacific, to the Polar Sea, provided the government owned them. Extravagance and loss did not matter. Thus grew across the country the huge rat-trap of the Canadian National Railway System, freely pardoned by the West for all its sin, as the Farmers' First Love.

The collapse of the wheat trade left the grain farmer of the



West stranded on the arid and empty prairie to which his erst-while farm returned. Nature itself took a hand and scourged him with drought and visited him with locusts to remind him to read his Bible. By the midsummer of 1933 the West had practically come to a full stop, living only on the accumulated momentum of credit, and such cohesion of economic life as still bound it to the Dominion.

No wonder that new winds of doctrine blew over the empty prairie. Theory lives best in a vacuum. Hence the increasing vogue of all sorts of new theories of money, credit and social reconstruction. Frederick Soddy's *Man versus Money* became the farmers' companion: he did not understand it but he understood Soddy to mean that bankers were crooks who lived on honest men and would not lend a cent to a man whose farm had been eaten away by locusts and blown away in a cyclone. What was needed was social reconstruction: that is free corrugated iron and locust poison. The doctrines of Major Douglas and others that filtered in under the name of "Social Credit" made an instant hit. The word "credit" was enough by itself.

Under such a stress the older political parties could no longer stand upright. For generations Canada had been governed by "Liberals" and "Conservatives" in accordance with the British tradition of picking up sides and playing according to rules—British government being really only an adaptation of cricket to public life. But in Alberta cricket was all gone. The United Farmers of Alberta overthrew the older parties. Beside them rose the organization of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (the C.C.F.) and other novelties.

But despite the people's parties the difficulties constantly increased, the money difficulties in the front rank; huge debts payable in New York in gold with Canadian dollars at ten per cent. discount. The city of Calgary refused payment, others dropped out: nothing but the disastrous fall of the American dollar itself effected a temporary salvation.

The Dominion of Canada did the best it could, which was in a sense, nothing: it taxed everybody who had any money and gave it to people who had none. This new system (called "unemployment relief") by which the rich work and the poor take a holiday is at best but a pleasant interlude. It is about



as permanent as sliding down a roof ; but for the moment it is all that one can do.

In moments of national emergency a prophet is always raised up. In Alberta the provincial election of 1935 saw the raising up of a prophet whose name was William Aberhart and whose word was Social Credit and whose gospel a little handbook to be had at a cost of ten cents. Aberhart, like other wise men, had come from the East, where he had been a teacher, and became a teacher in the West and an itinerant preacher and the founder of a sort of religion, expounded in the Prophetic Bible Institute at Calgary. He now appeared as a political apostle, rallied and carried the country upon a platform of Social Credit.

The Aberhart doctrine, or rather the doctrine of Social Credit in general, like all "people's doctrines" has something in it. It is based on the undeniable idea that no one of us brought anything into the world with us. Each of us has his natural claim to a share. We are, as it were, the joint heirs of a great estate, whereas our present social order dispossesses ninety-nine to install one. We may imagine that, in a general way, of all the wealth produced in a year, a certain part is due to the original heritage, and each of us has the right to that, whether we work or not. Rich or poor, wise or stupid, lazy or energetic—that much is ours. Call it, if you like, twenty-five dollars a month each—or shall we say sixty pounds a year?

This is not to say that all the Aberhartians looked into it as deeply as that. Probably most of them only read the manual as far as the page and paragraph where it said twenty-five dollars a month and were convinced without going further.

The moment was especially fortunate for such a doctrine. The cry for people's money had led the Dominion Government to establish a Central Bank, and the West had been disappointed with it. There is no need to discuss here the functions and utility of the Central Bank of Canada or its aid to the Government in finance. But there is no doubt that it does not do what the West expected of it. The Alberta farmer understood that the business of a central bank was to lend money to anybody who felt he needed it, and that you helped yourself to it as you do to a pumpkin pie at a threshing bee. When he saw that it did not do that, he looked for a quicker action.



There is a charming little French story, widely known from school-books and selections, called *Boom-Boom*. It tells of a little Parisian boy, smitten with fever and delirium calling for *Boom-Boom*, a clown whom he had seen at the Winter Circus. In despair they buy him a toy clown. But he cries still, "That's not *Boom-Boom*." Then they get the real clown to come—the real clown in private life, a grave, dignified gentleman; and still the child calls, "That's not *Boom-Boom*." The clown, a true artist at heart, exclaims "He's right!" disappears and returns in his clown suit, his cap and tassels, his mouth painted to the size of a letter-box. The child claps his hands with joy and shouts "*Boom-Boom!*" and is saved.

So with Alberta. Sick with adversity, feverish with anxiety, it called out for "people's money," for "cash-for-everybody," for "*Boom-Boom*." The Government of Canada fetched to the bedside the Central Bank. But the sick province took one look at the stately form of Mr. Graham Towers, the Governor, and cried out "That's not *Boom-Boom!*" So then the electors of 1935 brought Social Credit and the Rev. Mr. Aberhart, and the province rescued from its despair shouted "*Boom-Boom*, that's *Boom-Boom!*"

Mr. Aberhart was swept into power in the election of August, 1935, on the crest of a wave of tabernacle enthusiasm. The new Parliament showed in a House of 63 a majority phalanx of 56 Social Crediters (not Creditors), many, if not most, of whom had never sat in a legislature before.

There were great expectations and grave forebodings. It is said that many of the plainer people in the towns called next morning for their "social dividend" of twenty-five dollars. As for Mr. Aberhart, he found himself in the typically British situation, as old as Queen Anne, of finding himself suddenly changed from opposition to office and having to "make good." Fortunately there is also a British precedent as to what to do, namely, to do nothing. Mr. Aberhart announced that he must take "time to think," a need he had never announced before. He began to show a strong desire to consult people, to visit Father Coughlin, his "opposite number" in the United States, to send over to England for Major Douglas, the parent of Social Credit, and to go to "Ottawa," the Mecca of the provincial politician.

Meantime it was announced that it would take at least eighteen months to get the "social dividend" in working order. As far as the social dividend, the "twenty-five dollars a month" goes, that is exactly where it stands now (October 1, 1936) and where it will stand for ever. It will take it, it will *always* take it, eighteen months to start. Mr. Aberhart's Provincial Secretary announced the other day that he would not be surprised if the dividends were paid in fifteen months instead of eighteen. But other people would. The opinion is safe to hazard that not a dollar of Social Credit dividend will ever be paid in Alberta. Major Douglas meanwhile is out of the picture. He and Alberta have parted company. Mr. Aberhart roundly denounced him in the tabernacle meeting of the hot Sunday evenings of the drought of 1936. Meantime, however, all the provincial residents (beginning Monday, August 10, 1936) are being registered, or, rather, invited to register, for their dividends. This looks like business. But it seems that the registration has to be accompanied by the signing of a "Social Credit" covenant. The "covenant" covers a page of print and involves a lot of obligation in regard to accepting "Alberta Credit," selling in Alberta, and co-operating with the Government about production and price. Now a Canadian farmer will sign a promissory note in a fit of delirium, but he will not sign anything else. He wants to know, does signing the covenant control his production? Does it take away his farm? What *is* the darn thing anyway? As a matter of fact, nobody short of the Lords of the Privy Council could tell just what these Alberta covenants do and do not mean.

Add to this that there are a number of people of substance, the few who have anything solid left, who will not sign, on principle; and there are quite a crowd who have nothing and never had anything who refuse to sign because they want their money "straight" with no string on it. The latter have organized themselves (August, 1936) and have forwarded to His Majesty King Edward VIII a protest against being required to sign a covenant before "being entitled to participate in the dividends." Such a thing is seen by these Birds of Freedom as quite outside the scope of Magna Charta.

Yet some of the smaller towns had a heavy registration. Wetaskawin, which registered 250 in a day, must have turned



out to a man, or to a woman. Zone 5 of Calgary, where the poor live, had a heavy registration, and so did the East End of Edmonton ; and at least all the tabernacles sign and sing. The Premier insists that there shall be no compulsion in signing. But he warns the faithful of what may happen. "We want everyone to register," he declared in one of his semi-monthly broadcasts from the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute, "If you fail us, I'll be sorry, because I shall not be able to fulfil my promises." So there we have the way out: Mr. Aberhart's bridge is all ready. It is true that the autumn session of the legislature has brought certain "implementing" legislation. Bill No. 11 is entitled *An Act to Provide the People of Alberta with Additional Credit*. This would set up at Edmonton, the capital, a state credit board with branches through the province which have power to make "credit advances" (whatever that means) to duly registered citizens ; to provide persons entitled to credit in such manner as may be prescribed by Order in Council by the "Minister of Trade." A charge of two per cent. per annum may be made, or it may be not. All that this means is that the Minister is invited by the Government to think out some schemes of making loans, and making them to the right people. This means anything or nothing. As much or as little is done already in a hundred ways, as housing loans, allotment advances, and emergency credits. On the face of it the scheme and the registration and the discretionary power sounds like Robespierre and *civisme* and plundering the Treasury. But in Alberta nothing will come of it but a system of emergency loans, never repaid but not obviously unfair. The Alberta people, all in all, are still too British to make unfair loans, and too Scotch to make too many.

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If Social Credit were all, the Alberta situation would be just comedy, signifying nothing. It would pass as it came and the grain-fields would toss and wave again in the unending sunshine. But the really dark clouds are those that cover the financial background. The inner meaning and interest of the Aberhart regime lies in the debt question (public, corporate and even private) and in the money question—the mechanism of scrip and prosperity certificates.

Mr. Aberhart did not make the debt. The debt made him. Even before his appearance, from the causes shown above, the province and its municipalities floundered in a morass of debt. The public debt of Alberta stood in the summer of 1935 (the election was on August 22, 1935) at about \$150,000,000 dollars. The debts of the municipalities at about \$70,000,000. The three months' deficit before the election was nearly \$1,000,000. The province revenue could no longer pay its way. The Government made new loans to pay interest on the old ones. The Federal Government, the milch cow of the Canadian provinces, gave what nutriment it could (emergency subsidies for unemployment farm relief, and special advances). Nothing could avail. It was a jig-saw puzzle that would not fit. So Mr. Aberhart smashed it. It was a knot that would not untie. So Mr. Aberhart cut it. A contract that could not be paid: Mr. Aberhart blotted it out with tears: an oath that could not be kept: so Mr. Aberhart removed it by prayer. In situations like these nothing but the working of the spirit will apply. The tabernacle can do with a hymn what no court can do with a sentence.

In other words Mr. Aberhart repudiated nearly half of the public debt by cutting the interest on the 5 per cent. bonds to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ , and on the others similarly (Executive Order in Council, validated by the Provincial Securities Interest Act, 1936). The holder, domestic or foreign, had no choice. A Canadian province, under section 92 of the British North America Act of 1867, holds the full right over property and contract.

What will result from the repudiation?

There is a story of an Irish-American patriot who declared in a moment of national emergency that he was prepared to "sacrifice a part of the constitution and, if need be, the whole of it, to save the remainder." This magical trick, we are beginning to see, can be performed in public finance. An Alberta five per cent. bond, on which the interest looks very doubtful, is not as valuable as an Alberta two and a half per cent. bond on which the interest looks certain. All depends on the amount of doubt and the amount of certainty. The holder of the bond can test this on the public market. It may be that his bond, like the Jackdaw of Rheims, is more valuable with its tail off. An Alberta five per cent. bond of 1959 sold in February of 1935



for \$103. The same bond, with its coupon declared cashable for only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., was selling in October, 1936, at from 65 to 70. Arithmetically it should sell at only \$51.50. The bondholder has not lost half his money—not yet. The fall would be less still if there were certainty. Many coupons are not cashed. The holders prefer to wait and see. But their five per cent. they will never see.

With the partial repudiation of the public debt has gone a similar scaling down of municipal, corporate and private debt. The Municipal Securities Act, September, 1936, permits any Alberta municipality to reduce the interest on its bonds to three per cent. To what extent they will do so remains to be seen: they will have to measure against the immediate gain the loss of future credit, and the hostility of the present bond-holders. Mr. Aberhart, at least, leaves no doubt as to where he stands. He reiterates and emphasizes his opinion that in Canada “money gets too much and men too little.” This means, in the language of the tabernacle, that the capitalist class get too large a share, that interest is too great a burden, that money, borrowed at boom prices and paying its full interest with prices sunk in the pit of depression, no longer represents a fair bargain, but a fetter and a chain. Let him who will accept or reject the argument. But put it with passion, that “money gets too much and men too little,” and pound it into the desk of the tabernacle, and it “gets over.” It recalls Mr. Bryan’s cry for America “crucified upon a cross of gold.”

More interesting to the economist than the cancellation of debt (as old as Pharaoh), is the attempt of Mr. Aberhart to “make” money. The British North America Act of 1867 reserves the issue of legal tender to the Dominion. Mr. Aberhart circumvents it by Prosperity Certificates or Alberta scrip.

The Alberta “Prosperity Certificates” look like “stage money,” plentifully sprinkled with dollar marks and a framework of future dates on the back. They are issued by the Government and handed out as unemployment relief and in various other ways. In order to give them “velocity” in circulation they are made too hot to hold: the possessor must refresh them every Wednesday by gumming on its proper space a stamp that costs two per cent. of the certificate. They are not “legal

tender," but the Government will, so the Treasurer announced, redeem them at intervals for "all and sundry"—and he added "for good and sufficient reasons"; that is, it will if it feels like it. But the Government will not take them from day to day in payment of the sales tax, but only on three days a month. As between citizens, anyone can take them as a payment if he wishes. In many places the first batch "sold" like hot cakes—as souvenirs. After that circulation has become restricted. The post office (that is, the Dominion Government) refuses them; so do all railroad, express, telegraph, insurance and similar companies. Theatres and moving-picture houses will not take them. Country storekeepers accept them readily for purchases; but they would accept a French assignat of 1789 or a George Washington continental dollar of 1778 rather than not make a sale. Nearly all big stores refuse them: the bigger the store, the firmer the refusal. Companies of other provinces, unless feverishly eager for business, refuse them entirely, or take only a percentage. But the unemployed, not looking a gift certificate on the back, reach out for them. Meanwhile, the courts are "sitting" on them. A court at Edmonton (open to appeal) issued an injunction forbidding the city to accept them from the province as its unemployment subsidy. The province replied with a validating Act.

As a matter of fact the Prosperity Certificate is doomed from its birth. It will go the way of all scrip. Nor does it make any great difference. Few people realize that such a financial expedient is not a "flow" of wealth but a mere filling of a bowl once, and after that a few drops yearly for evaporation. The "cash money" needed in Alberta, small change and all, computed *per capita* from the Dominion total may be put at \$15,000,000. Print that, and it is all over. Once printed it comes in and goes out, with casual annual increase.

Here is what will happen in Alberta. The Prosperity Certificate will die. The Social Credit dividend will never be born. The old debts will be scaled down. The new will grow up. The Aberhart party will go out. The Conservatives will come in. They always do.



## M. BLUM'S REVOLUTION

BY PHILIP CARR

IN considering the present very difficult situation in France, the first question that will be asked is : Will M. Blum's Government be able to continue the career which has already enabled it to carry such an amazing amount of fundamental economic and financial changes ? Certain well-informed people say No—that when the Chamber returns at the end of October, M. Blum is bound to fall ; but I believe that, barring the quite possible accident which an unexpected development of any one of the serious problems confronting it may produce, the Blum Government will continue. Although the Communists could probably defeat the Government, they could only do so with the result of making all government in the present Chamber impossible, or else with the result of creating such fear among the supporters of order that the Left Wing Radicals and the Extreme Right would temporarily work together. In any case, the Communists would cease to influence policy, and it would be evident to the country that they had made impossible the passage of any more of the popular measures which the country so ardently desires and has to a great extent obtained, and also that they had even imperilled the application of what has already been obtained.

Therefore, although the Communists will try to keep their end up in the eyes of the electorate, and although they will try to make it appear that they are forcing the Socialists to adopt extreme reforms, and although they will hope that by so doing they will dish the Socialists at the next election, they will, I believe, never go so far as to throw out the present Government, or even to create serious difficulties in the country for the Government. They will climb down again and again rather than do either of these things. Indeed they have already climbed down in this way more than once. For example, there was the famous speech by M. Thorez—" *Il faut savoir terminer une grève* "—which

virtually called off the June strikes. There was the docile submission to the Government's recent innovation of using the police to clear out stay-in strikers from the factories—which would not have been done so easily if the Communists had not accepted it—and most recently there was the retreat over the question of the 122 and then of the 52 proposed Communist meetings in Alsace-Lorraine and the eventual acceptance of the Government's limitation to 10. These last two affairs played so directly into the hands of M. Blum that if they were not concerted for his benefit, which they probably were not, they might well have been.

For what is the chief preoccupation of M. Blum at the present moment in the field of party politics? It is to convince the Radical Party that the Government is determined to maintain order and what is called in France *légalité*, or observance of the law, throughout the country. And he is particularly preoccupied with this just now—I am writing before the meeting of the congress of the Radical party—because a certain number of the Right Wing Radicals, who cannot swallow the alliance with the Communists, threaten to make trouble. The sting would be to a great extent removed from this attack if the Government would show itself to be taking a strong line and to be exercising authority with a firm hand.

The attack in itself must not be taken too seriously. A rather exaggerated importance has been given to it by the fact that one of the few Radical papers in Paris, the *République*, has given expression to it. Now, the *République* is inspired by M. Caillaux, and M. Caillaux is perhaps to-day the most typical and certainly the most influential representative of that old-fashioned kind of Radicalism which commands a majority in the Senate but has an importance there quite out of proportion to its strength in the Chamber or the country.

This is the section of the Radical Party which has for some time been manœuvring privately to undermine, and agitating publicly to break up, the Popular Front by means of the repudiation of the alliance with the Communists. It is this section of the Radical Party which has perhaps been responsible for the rumour that M. Chautemps hopes to follow the Socialist and Radical Government of M. Blum, of which he is himself a member,



with a Ministry based on a coalition between the Right Wing Radicals and the Centre. But both M. Chautemps and M. Daladier themselves contradict this rumour. They realize that, as I have indicated above the Popular Front combination is the only one which presents a working majority in the present Chamber.

The effect of all this, I believe, will be that the Radical Ministers will remain in the Government, and the Radical Party will continue its co-operation, if only M. Blum can show that his Government will keep order at home and will maintain peace abroad.

And, because Radical support depends upon these two conditions, I am convinced that the Communists in France, who have no desire to be responsible for the overthrow of the Popular Front Government, are not entirely sorry to give M. Blum the opportunity of showing that he can keep order ; and I am convinced that the Communists in Russia, who have no desire for political confusion and therefore for weakness in their ally and main hope of protection against Germany will, in the last resort, do nothing seriously to endanger peace or to make it impossible for M. Blum to maintain peace. This, I have some reason for believing, is the opinion of M. Herriot, who is now in relative retirement as President of the Chamber, but is certainly destined eventually to return to the arena, and is in any case in close touch and sympathy with Soviet opinion. Moscow, he thinks, will take no such measures in support of the Spanish Government as would precipitate an international crisis.

This estimate of the probable attitude of the Communists will surprise many people in England ; but many, even among anti-Communists in France, are in agreement with it. For it is not only the French Communists who are in sympathy with the Franco-Soviet alliance, which finds support in the parties of the Right, and also in the general staff of the army. Moreover, the 72 Communists now represent more than 11½ per cent. of the total strength of the Chamber, and that without counting the dozen Independent Communists and even some of the Left Wing Socialists, who might vote with them. This means that they must be taken seriously. Besides, they form part of the regular Government majority, although they refused

to put any of their number into the Government itself, and they can no longer be considered merely as irresponsible wild men.

It is not only on the Left in France, therefore, that there is agreement with the view, which I myself hold, that the Communists are not likely to make difficulties for the Blum Government, either abroad or at home, and that still less likely are they to foment internal disorder which would lead to such difficulties. Nor do I believe that serious internal disorder will occur at all, although I certainly cannot say that, in the course of the social and economic readjustment following upon what has been no less than a Revolution, carried through in a few weeks, there is no danger of such disorder. It would be folly to pretend that there is not. Of two things I am confident, however ; first, as I have said, that it will not be created by the organizations of the Extreme Left and, second, that it will not be created by the organizations of the Extreme Right.

The Croix de Feu—who were officially dissolved a few months ago as an illegal association, but were immediately resuscitated under the name of the Parti Social Français—have had their numbers and effective capacity for action enormously exaggerated, both by their friends on the Right and—naturally enough, as part of the political game—by their opponents on the Left. Colonel de la Rocque himself claims that little short of a million men have been enrolled. The Communists retort that this total, even supposing it to be accurate, includes an enormous number who are no longer members. They put the strength at 200,000. It is almost certainly much less than that. The important point about them, however, is this. By far the greater part of the middle-class young men who have joined them have done so with the idea at the back of their minds that they were helping to create a sort of amateur police force, a body of special constables, for the preservation of public order. If they thought they were fulfilling such a function, they would march ; but I believe that relatively few of them would do so if they suspected that they were being used as an instrument in a political conflict.

However, whether there is going to be disorder in Paris or not—and I think there is not—I am convinced of one thing.



The issue will very soon cease to be one between Fascism and Communism, or even between Capitalism and Communism. Events have moved so fast in the Revolution—which began with the strikes in June—that it may almost be said that Fascism and Communism are beginning to be as out of date as the sort of Capitalism which we have known has already become. They have all three played their part in the various rapid stages of this Revolution, but they will soon be replaced by other ideals, for which new names will have to be found ; and France will once again in her history be recognized as having given to the world the intellectual impetus and the example in a great movement of reorganization.

Let us follow what actually happened in the early summer.

On Sunday, May 3rd, was elected the Chamber, which returned such a sweeping Popular Front majority and aroused such hopes in so many working-class hearts. The Sarraut Government no longer had any authority, nor any but a nominal existence ; but—and this was the crucial point—exactly a month passed before it was replaced by the Government of M. Blum. During this interval, which the formalities connected with the meeting of the new Chamber apparently made necessary, many of the rank and file of the Left parties began to suspect that preparations were being made to trick them out of the fruits of their victory as they believed they had been tricked in 1924. Consequently, when the first of the “ stay in ” strikes presented an opportunity for taking direct action of a kind to cut the ground from under the feet of the enemies of the working classes and to strengthen the hands of their friends, it was seized upon with an enthusiasm which made the strikes spread like wildfire.

It is true that this is not the only account given of the origin of the strikes, about which there are still differences of opinion ; but it is the only one which fits in with the known facts. It has been suggested that the whole thing was started by certain mysterious “ Trotskyist ” revolutionaries. But I think it is paying too high a compliment to Mr. Trotsky to believe that he could have set on foot such a formidable organization. To say that the thing was engineered by the C.G.T. (the trades unionists) or even by the Communists, is merely to betray a complete ignorance of what happened. For there can be no

question that quite early in the proceedings both Communists and C.G.T. were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the whole business and by the appeals which came tumbling in upon them, hour by hour, from factories whose staffs had decided to strike and sent messages to one headquarters or the other to ask for a delegate to be sent to take charge of the operations. Naturally, both Communists and C.G.T. tried at once to behave as if they had prepared the whole scheme, and knew all about it. To have done otherwise would have been equivalent to committing political suicide. But it was obvious that they knew nothing or very little, and that they were totally unprepared.

If it had been otherwise, it is hardly credible that these strikes would have been launched without some previous efforts to enrol the workers into the trades unions and to organize the strike in some kind of disciplined manner ; but nothing is more significant as evidence that this was a sudden and spontaneous outburst on the part of the workers than the enormous percentage of new trade union memberships, not before the strikes, but immediately after them. The latest figures show that whereas the total number of trades unionists affiliated to that central organization was only a million in the spring of this year, it is now not short of five times as many. The memberships of some unions have increased in astronomical proportions. That of the metal workers has been multiplied by 15, that of the chemical industry workers by 30, that of the agricultural labourers by 20, that of the wood-workers by 12, those of the draughtsmen, porcelain workers and harbour workers by 10, those of the textile workers and the glass workers by 9 and 8 respectively. I know myself of a certain factory in the Paris district where there was not a single trades unionist before the strikes, and now 90 per cent. of the staff have joined the union.

This relative absence of organization among the workers at the moment of the strikes, an absence which enabled M. Blum to declare in the Chamber on June 12th that there were only 2 per cent. of trades unionists among the strikers, might have been expected to result in a chaotic state of things, in which not only would it be impossible to find qualified representatives on the men's side with whom to negotiate, not only would it be impossible to rely upon an agreement being observed, but in



which disorder, damage and general sabotage, to some extent at least, would be impossible to prevent.

What actually happened? The Matignon agreement, which closed the strike on the basis of the employers agreeing to a standard minimum agreement in each trade, the forty-hour week, and the annual holiday on full pay, was signed at the Hotel Matignon, the official residence of the Prime Minister, during the night of June 7th. The next day the Minister of the Interior was able to announce that this formidable strike movement had been carried through with only exceptional and very minor disorders and without the loss of a single life.

Such a remarkable result indicated an equally remarkable state of mind on the part of the strikers. And it was indeed remarkable. The almost universal experience of owners and managers was that even when they were not allowed to leave the works, their relations with their men were not only governed by mutual respect, but were amicable. It might even be said that in these unprecedented circumstances cordiality between the two parties increased rather than diminished. I know of one works manager whose men brought him shaving water and cleaned his boots in the morning, though they would not let him go out; and in a couple of days he found himself advising them about the drawing up of regulations for the appointment of shop delegates, with the mechanism of which he had been familiar in England. As for the regard shown for property, the oiling and upkeep of the machinery, and so forth, there can be given as many illuminating examples as there can of the orderliness and voluntary discipline which were almost everywhere observed in the conduct of the strike—and this, be it remembered, among workpeople who were in most cases not yet trade unionists and whose organization had to be improvised.

It is true that attempts have been made to explain the care for the machinery by quoting a Communist speaker, who advised the men to "take proper care of the engines, for they will be your engines to-morrow." But the general opinion of managers who went through the strike is that although this may represent the view of the Communists, it does not represent the attitude of the majority of the strikers.

That attitude can hardly be said yet to be formulated, but it

appears to be based upon the idea of co-operation. The engines to-morrow will neither belong to the Capitalists nor to the workers, nor to the managers. They will belong to all three. In the economic order which will work out this triple ownership, a definite place will be found for the sturdy individualism without which the most intellectually attractive theories of equality can never work in France. Capitalism as we knew it is dead, but property will not be abolished. Communism will never be assimilated by the French ; but the hatred of disorder and economic anarchy, which inspires many Communists, the elimination of hatred and suspicion between those who are jointly engaged in production, which is part of the Communist ideal, can easily be adopted in France. The organization of compulsory equality will never survive in so individualist a people ; but to destroy the conception that any one of the partners in production is automatically in a state of inferiority is in sympathy with the fundamental French ideas of social and economic relations.

All this is for the future, although the not-very-distant future. What are the immediate prospects for to-day ? How are they affected by devaluation ? Will there be further labour troubles ? How are things working out under the concession obtained under the Matignon agreement and the legislation resulting from it ? What is the position in agriculture ?

Everything is still in such a state of transition that it is not yet possible to give answers to all these questions. However, the latest unemployment returns published on October 3rd do furnish encouraging indication of stability. Not only does unemployment show no increase since the beginning of June, but it has even slightly diminished. No doubt a certain amount of unemployment should eventually be absorbed by the application of the forty-hour week and the full-pay holidays. But in most cases the holiday was given simply by closing down, and did not involve the taking on of extra hands in any but the few factories where the men were sent on leave in relays ; and as for the forty-hour week, it is not yet in application in certain important industries, including that of the metal workers, nor in the government workshops, so that its effect as yet has not been great.

As for the possibility of further labour troubles in the towns,



that depends upon how far the cost of living is going to rise as a result of devaluation, and how far labour will accept the rise without asking for further increases of wages. There is no doubt that there has been serious resentment among the working classes against the bitter opposition of the Senate to the Government proposal for a sliding scale, which would send up wages if the cost of living went up—an opposition which ended in the defeat of the proposal. It was felt that the employers were taking away with one hand what they had given with the other.

At the same time, many competent financial critics are of opinion that a certain measure of increase in the cost of living must be accepted without a further rise in wages, for if prices do not rise to a certain extent, the small manufacturer and the small tradesman cannot be saved from ruin ; and the importance of both of these classes in French economic and social life cannot be neglected. That increase in prices need perhaps not be large if money, for French internal purposes, is kept plentiful and cheap, and in the opinion of some it might be avoided altogether. The most general view is, however, that a rise in prices of 20 per cent. is required if the small trader and manufacturer are to live, although that rise is more necessary in wholesale prices than in retail, and must be slow and regular rather than sudden if it is to have its proper beneficial effect. It is pointed out that devaluation has been followed by a rise in prices in all countries except Great Britain, and that even here a real rise was concealed by the fact that world prices were falling at the time. The Government, it is urged, should therefore not try to restrict the inevitable rise—inevitable, in spite of what the Minister of National Economy has declared in his recent speech—for to do so would only be following the bad example of Italy and Germany. They should educate the country to accept a rise which shall be limited and gradual. Employers must be organized, not to raise prices by restricting output, but to prevent an excessive rise in prices from restricting consumption, and bankers must be organized to assist the movement by granting cheap credit, which they can only do by a reform of the banking system and under prudent public finance.

The rise in prices must not be great for two reasons. The

first is that it would upset the delicate labour equilibrium ; but there is another, and that is that if it carried the prices of French production, as calculated upon a gold basis, above those of foreign competitors, it would mean the breakdown of the gradual return to relative free trade to which the Blum Government and certain foreign governments are gradually feeling their way. France would be forced to return to a severe autarchy, with a rigid balance between imports and exports and an absolute control over home production and over the prices of all necessities.

This is the financial and economic problem which the Government of M. Blum now has to face.

It is a serious problem, as are many others, at home and abroad, with which M. Blum is confronted. But he has overcome so many obstacles, with such remarkable judgment, skill and steadfastness of purpose, that there is good reason to hope that he will not be defeated by the new ones.

The success of the Blum Government and of M. Blum personally has hitherto been indeed remarkable. When he took office the papers of the Right could hardly find terms of abuse too violent for him. He was a casuist, a hair-splitter, a dilettante, and a man of no strength of character. He was a Socialist. That was bad enough. He was a Jew, and France had never consented to a Jew being Prime Minister. And yet I should like to draw attention to this rather remarkable fact. Of all the French Prime Ministers who have held office since I went to live in France in 1913, there is not one who, in my opinion, is more unquestionably entitled, by his intellectual refinement and by his personal distinction, to be called a gentleman. Not that it matters very much, perhaps ; but it is interesting.



## SILCHESTER

BY H. J. MASSINGHAM

**I**N the country of ideas the Romans have never left Britain. As battalions of thought, there are more Roman legions in Britain today than there were soldiers armed with stabbing sword and pilum before Silchester was a ruin. An intricately organized government and a centralized bureaucracy were Roman importations dissolved by the Saxons but slowly coalescing once more when the Tudor Age unveiled the morning of modernism. The commercial struggle for existence is as Roman a concept as any. The Celtic, Saxon and medieval village communities, descending in close lineage from a common parent, were run not for profit, but for subsistence. In Romano-Celtic Britain, Roman coinage took the place of inter-village barter and Roman sherds, glass, brooches and other commodities, standardized and mass-produced from factories, displaced the local Celtic crafts at Glastonbury and elsewhere. For a time, the native town-and-village art was smothered, until its designs of meandering curves and scrolls gradually reappeared as the Romans in Britain unconsciously absorbed—as at Bignor Villa—the Celtic culture. By the time of the fourth century A.D., large consignments of British corn began to be exported to Gaul, and this process would have destroyed the village communities as surely as the enclosing of the common wastes, and their conversion into cornlands to meet the artificially high prices forced up by the Napoleonic wars, actually did destroy them. It was the Saxon invasion which prevented England from going modern for another thousand years.

Our contemporary system of communications by arterial roads between one big town and another was born when the Stane Street and Ackling Dyke, ploughing across the downs and through Celtic arable fields and Bronze Age barrows, were laid. Sir Lawrence Gomme justly maintained that Roman London was situated not in Roman Britain but on the Ermine and Watling

Streets. Rome was the goal of the Roman roads, and Verulamium, Eboracum and Silchester were but stations along the route. The Roman power was measured by the Roman road and, when the Saxons overran Kent, London crumbled into silence. Its main artery was severed. When the Saxons occupied London itself, what did they do? They ignored the marts, the palaces, the basilicas, the hive of overseas commerce fed and stocked through a network of roads. They founded the village communities they had inherited from their Teutonic forefathers at Charing and at Islington, at Fulham and at Kensington. Their tribal habits had no more to do with the Roman commercial organization than had the Celtic village itself. A swarm of agricultural settlements at the feet of the downs and along the river-banks, connected by narrow lanes and ending in -ham, -ton or -ing, supplanted the Roman villa and the Roman colonia. "Long Acre" is the sole surviving name to remind us of the time when the environs of London were a chain of village communities, and Lammas lambs skipped in Leicester Square.

The Machine Age is seen in embryo in the engineering genius which the Romans devoted to metalled highways which have been disintegrated by time and nature, while the older trackways and green roads survived by their integral fellowship with nature. The culture of Imperial Rome was urban, as is our own. These parallels could be multiplied to weariness, and I have but one more to gather in. The natural environment of Silchester is the northerly boundary of a land of deep oakwoods, expressive of the Tertiary beds overlaying the chalk. There are religious groves of them as at Aldermaston, breathing solemnity over fecund pastures, open commons of heath, pine and bracken, once the common waste of the old villages, and high-hedged winding lanes whose tortuous labyrinth reaches climax in the country between Chute Causeway and the Collinbourne woodlands. The region which secretes Silchester lies, in round terms, between the Kennet Valley and the chalk downs going south from Inkpen Beacon to Winchester, an extended arm of Salisbury Plain called the Hampshire Highlands. Everywhere, it suggests the remains of oak-woods once as mighty as Harewood to the south-west, and in Saxon times these were united to Harewood,



Savernake and the Kennet jungle to form a wedge of forest continuous with the denser Andredsweald or Anderida Silva along the clay-lands to the east. These noble, vanishing woodlands the Forestry Commission is replacing with its settlements of militarized conifers, particularly on the wild heaths and commons in the region of Aldermaston, Pudworth and Burghfield. On Mortimer Common, for instance, these dwarf spruces, all drawn up in line one row behind another, make a dead sea of sombre green round the two fine bowl barrows that stand thereon, soon to be shut out from view by these lifeless, uniform plantations. The Roman name survives in villages like Stratfield Mortimer, Stratfield Saye and Stratfield Turgis. But the Roman spirit has been reincarnated in the uprising of these funereal and standardized woodlands, which all beasts and birds, being of nature, avoid. They seem the disciplined ghosts of the old legions that marched into Silchester by the straight roads that met the four gates that faced the four cardinal points of the compass.

There is so much to be seen with the mind's eye at Silchester ; the vision is so dramatic and the little wilderness is the oracle of a meaning so universal that an outward show of ruined pomp set within a scene of natural majesty would have been too distracting. No ancient site in England is less spectacular than this great administrative centre of the Roman power. It is difficult to find : if the Roman roads were straight, the Saxon lanes that alone lead to Silchester today are as crooked as the courses of Itchen and Test. You turn and twist and creep along with eye glued to the map, and what do you see when you get there ? Nothing—you have reached only a nucleus of remoteness, on a gentle plateau of some two to three hundred feet. The only conspicuous monument of man to be viewed other than his fields and his hedgerows is the lofty, imposing tower of Highclere Church erect upon a westward eminence rather higher than Silchester's. Beyond, to the south and south-west, the soft and pearl-lighted chalk downs sweep into a crescent from Andover to Basingstoke. There, at Seven Barrows, on Ladle Hill and Bury Hill and Inkpen Beacon, lie the memorials of a civilization as much older than the Roman as ours is younger, and yet one that has left witnesses of its presence among them that

contributes to the landscape of today. They have lasted better than Silchester.

At last, though guideless, you enter Rome. The great walls appear that enclose a hundred acres and run for about eight hundred yards in an irregular octagon. You have an open view of the miniature Saxon-born church with its weather-boarded foolscap steeple, a form characteristic of the neighbourhood and reaching full maturity further east in Kent and Sussex. But of Giant Balbus you only see the flittings, so smothered is his form in clouds of foliage. At the farm close to the church, the wall is at its loftiest, perhaps twenty feet high, the average being from twelve to fifteen feet, and the lowest about ten. Here, being disencumbered of vegetation, that magnificent masonry is seen at its most enduring, gleaming nuggets of squared and polished flint from the chalk hills bonded with courses of great limestone blocks at intervals of a yard or more and not very much smaller than the stone-masses of the Roman Gateway north of Lincoln Cathedral. You itch to run your fingers over this jewelled flint, this grey, moon-chaste limestone. You long to take a magnifying glass to the set of the stone into that matchless mortar, the pillow of a sleep that might, but for one overpowering prohibition, have been to world's end. But a smaller, a pert and fussy veto, says no. An unclimbable fence, separated by between twenty and thirty yards from the wall, girdles its entire circumference. There is some sense in railing off the monuments of archaic England from potential injury at the hands of the more monkeyish sightseer. But the trees and thorns and bramble and ivy and holly, even the soft-fingered bryony and traveller's joy, are destroying the walls of Silchester by a deadlier, surer mischief than a daily avalanche of charabancs could effect in as many years as have passed since the blocks were piled under the eye of the centurions.

Nothing is left of Roman Silchester but its walls and ditches. The houses, the mosaic floors, the temple, the forum within the walls all lie beneath the undemonstrative glebe. There are gaps for the four gateways, lacunae only. Oblivion has scattered its weeds over the roads, even the Portway that once made its javelin thrust to Old Sarum. Nothing can be traced of them except the part-bank, part-trackway, strewn with broken flints



and gravel, that crosses the fields for about a mile south-west from Church Lane Copse, east of the Amphitheatre. Only the flints, scattered over the clay, reveal that this is the relic of the Roman road to Winchester. Of the Roman road that linked the north gate to Spinae, a grey milestone, the "Impstone," alone remains to mark its passage, while the London road from the east gate, named the Devil's Highway, only becomes defined a mile from the Berkshire border, east of Roman Silchester. The causeways, banks and entrenchments in Dicker's and Rampions Copses are certainly pre-Roman.

Balbus was a strong man, an Atlas who bore the weight of the world. But Silchester has been too much for him ; something more forcible than Rome, mightier than the imperial power, has borne him down. These walls are crowned with headdresses whose weight they cannot bear. The roots of ivy knot the summit of the wall like a nest of pythons ; hawthorns and hollies from it reach the height of the ash, and the ash is as tall as the elm. Their root-fibres grip the time-defying mortar and crumble it to powder. Elm and oak and sycamore soar above their stony bed and the scrub that clothes the side of the wall, even the fern and the heartsease are slowly squeezing it into the particles that slide down and make a compost for their seeds. The pliant, glinting whitebeam lends its aid to the work of demolition alongside some Samson oak whose muscles never slacken. These walls, symbolic of an abstract idea that now rules the world, are disintegrating under the gaze of the years. The marvel is that, bearing a jungle on their backs, they have survived for us to see their vertebræ disjoining and their sinews parting. The process is already far advanced and little by little they will yield under the monumental pressure from above and the dismemberment below, until Silchester is a heap of rubble. In their fall here and there, they will topple over many a patriarchal tree, crashing like chimney stacks. But other dynasties of trees will rein in their stead until Silchester is nothing but a name hovering over pastures, groves and cornlands.

This dense vegetation offers a strange and powerful spectacle. So frequently are the walls obscured by it that from a little distance away the trees and bushes are elevated from the surrounding country, not in a natural way, as though standing upon a

circular bank or ridge, but as though lofted by some mysterious agency. They appear to float on air, and this, combined with the profusion of the shrubbier growth and the height and girth of the boles, clothes them in a special grandeur and authority which once the walls themselves possessed. It is a dignity actually derived from the walls whose strength feeds, whose virtue ministers to the natural life which is their ruin. The life of nature has more than abased the pride of Roman Silchester; the unserviceable works it has obliterated, the rest utilized for its own ends. Its patient hidden dynamos have undone the Roman power in the old Celtic capital at a time when the human stage has revived the Roman ethos and in the science and actions of men has reincarnated the Roman idea.

Outside the walls and at their north-eastern corner lies the Roman Amphitheatre, whose sloping oval bank of thirteen feet in height encloses the grassy floor of an arena that measures forty yards by fifty. It abuts upon the line of the huge Celtic ramp that surrounded the whole circumference of the Roman walls and contained within it and its outworks of Rampiers Copse and elsewhere the principal city of the Atrebates. The pre-Roman fortress-town, though not so visually impressive as those of Quarley, Danebury, Ladle and St. Catherine's Hills, is the largest of all the Celtic camps of Hampshire. Its earthen walls rose to thirty feet above the level of the fosse, so that, allowing for the difference between earth and stone, it was of greater extent and more massively constructed than the Roman walls. It does not excite the imagination as the rather earlier Danebury and Walbury do, because it belongs to the class of Cæsar's *oppida*, Celtic walled townships built not on the open downs, but in the forested lowlands, much ploughed down and not to be taken in as a unity. It is clear that the Amphitheatre bears a closer geographical relation to the Celtic walls of earth than to the Roman walls of stone. There are other indications that the arena was the conception of Calleva Atrebatum rather than of Silchester which adapted it for spectacular games and professional blood-letting. It is nothing like the arena at Isca (Cærlleon) where the encircling walls, the gangways and the stones inscribed with the names of centurions are still in existence. But it is very similar in form and site of entrance to the Amphitheatres



of Maumbury Rings at Dorchester and of Charterhouse-on-Mendip, whose orientation is the same as that of Stonehenge. Silchester's Amphitheatre is aligned upon the same axis, and it is evident that it was a *locus consecratus* for ritual dance, seasonal festival and tribal convocation one or two centuries before the Roman invasion.

I so recognized it by my experience of many other earth circles throughout the land. It looks no more Roman than the prehistoric Harroway which passes over the Highlands a few miles due south of Silchester on its tremendous journey to Dover from Marazion in Cornwall. That far-travelled road survives in its line of least resistance to the local configuration of the hills where many a Roman road, tensed and unbending, indifferent to the lie of the land, imposed like a weal upon the face of nature, has perished. The achievement of the Roman will has proved less tough than that of a pre-Roman deference to natural dispensations. It is the same at the Atrebatan place of assembly. The arena is floored with a sedgy grass, with lusty dock and ranunculus twice their proper height, perhaps the site of a spring, anciently sacred and drained by a Roman conduit. The earth-work is as thick with trees as are the Roman walls. The "unwedged and gnarled oak" is as in the days of its prime among the glades of Anderida Silva. But the peculiar glory of this earthen wall are the hollies. Many of them rise out of the bracken from forty to fifty feet in height, glowing in their burnished coats of arms, and the trunk of one of them has been measured at half an inch over five feet in girth.

But the trees were not growing at the expense of the ramp which easily supported them and still kept its original shape and contour. Celt and megalith-builder followed a different rule of life from the Roman. It was one which, whatever its ethical childhood, did not superimpose itself upon nature, nor had severed itself from the influences of nature. Its structures and patterns were unconsciously moulded by them and were in concord with their rhythms. The will, the intellect had not yet set itself upon a throne apart. Its roads, its tombs, its walls flowed with the lines of nature. The great schism was not yet manifest. Accordingly, we find that nature has dealt gently with their works.

## SPAIN FROM THE INSIDE

BY W. HORSFALL CARTER

I WAS one of the signatories of a collective letter to *The Times*, published on August 19th, registering sympathy for the Spanish people and the cause of democracy—in the humanistic sense, not conceived as postulating a particular political system—which the Spanish *Frente Popular* is seeking to defend. In response to a friendly challenge on the part of the Madrid correspondent of *The Times* I agreed to go out to study “on the spot” the new developments. I am, if you like, a partisan of the loyalists’ cause; not, however, from any illusions about the Spaniards’ capacity for working Parliamentary institutions but simply because, on balance, there seems some hope of Spain working out through storm and stress her own destiny when once the refusal of certain classes to accept the 1931 changes has been surmounted—whereas a return to the old order can only mean temporarily smothering the explosion.

Port-Bou, the sleepy and picturesque fishing-port through which one enters Spain on the side of the Eastern Pyrenees, at once struck the new note of the Workers’ State. Civil Guards and *carabineros* having left the State in the lurch, policing and passport control is being carried out by the agents of the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militia, which has its headquarters in the principal hotel of Barcelona. This Committee groups the various workers’ organizations, usually known by their initials. In Catalonia, the number of workers whose trade union *carnet* is that of the C.N.T., with its anarchist affiliations, far exceeds that of its Socialist counterpart, the U.G.T. As might be expected, therefore, it is the syndicalists who have taken over most of the routine tasks of government. And these anarchists, in the words of an official report to the British Government, “are busily engaged in restoring and maintaining order.” (To good souls in, say, Richmond this may sound fantastic, but I would



only ask them to distinguish between anarchism, a doctrine of social and economic life which has at any rate as good a pedigree as Socialism, and anarchy, a temporary condition invariably accompanying the early stages of any prodigious social upheaval.) It is quite wrong, of course, to allege that the bourgeois Government of the Generalitat which remained in office until a few weeks ago had abdicated its functions to the workers' committees. It was simply a sharing of responsibilities. Now the Anti-Fascist Committee is dissolved and a Catalan Government including three syndicalists, two Socialists, and one Opposition Communist illustrates more clearly the way in which the various elements of the People's Front are pulling together. The challenge from "reaction" has brought about a degree of proletarian unity such as six months ago, when I was also in Spain, was quite inconceivable.

There was not much sign of the War in Port-Bou, nor of the "revolution" which was the principal topic of the newspapers. At first the anarchist in charge sternly refused to admit me into the country. He was obviously suspicious of the safe-conduct furnished by such a bourgeois authority as the Spanish Embassy in London, which unfortunately described me as a foreign journalist. Later, however, he relented. The extra day spent in Port-Bou was well worth while, and incidentally it enabled me to peep into Bruno's life-history, as he explained over a glass of beer why he had forsaken Communism for anarchism. It was the rigid bureaucratism of the Communist Party, he said, which he could endure no longer. I don't know about other bureaucratic vices, but the F.A.I. authorities in charge of policing and transport throughout the coastal area from Barcelona down to Malaga certainly have a passion for issuing permits and stamping documents. I calculate I must have spent some twenty hours during my month's visit to Spain procuring the necessary passes to move on or to stay where I was!

The Communist Party, under the direction of Moscow, plays a very small part in the life of Catalonia. It has recently merged with the likewise comparatively unimportant Catalan Socialist Party. If the trade union organization, the U.G.T., on the other hand, has made great strides lately in this region, it is

because so many professional men and *petits bourgeois*, who formerly were not members of any syndicate, have incorporated themselves in the "Workers' State" and have preferred the more moderate U.G.T. to its anarcho-syndicalist rival. More important than either of the orthodox Marxist parties is the P.O.U.M.—*Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista*—which is anything but an element of unification! Nevertheless, it is also represented in the new Catalan Government by its ablest leader, Andres Nin, as Councillor of Justice.

In Barcelona, as in Madrid and the other towns where "the people" is exulting in its revolution, the most obvious and significant change is a sartorial one. Many a good bourgeois has "taken off his tie" to show that he is attuned to the new proletarian times. Collars, ties, and hats are at a discount. During twelve days in Madrid I saw two women only wearing hats, one of them obviously a foreigner. There is no compulsion about it, only silent social pressure. But already, I fear, the regime of the *sans-cravates* is doomed; not because of the approach of winter, but for the very good reason that the syndicates of the hat and haberdashery trades are up in arms. It was suggested in one newspaper article that the Government will soon have to issue an ordinance to the effect that "any person who previous to July 19th was accustomed to wearing a hat and has since stopped wearing one, without good reason, shall be considered hostile to the loyalist cause."

Needless to say, any "enemies of the loyalist cause" get short shrift. And there is a certain amount of victimization, in the big towns as much as in the smaller villages, for, as it happens, village solidarity is often the best protection for the suspect.

But the Government is gradually regaining control over the committees and the unauthorized squads which carried out raids on the private houses of "Fascists" in the first weeks. If there are still every day a number of killings which the ordinary official vigilance committees are unable to prevent, no one is more disturbed and distressed than the authorities—in Barcelona or in Madrid.

For Spain is experiencing all the horrors, the bitterness, and the stress of civil war. The fact must never be forgotten. Our



own Boche-hunting frenzy during the World War should make us pause before we condemn the crusade against "Fascists" which is the ugly side of present-day life in Spain behind the lines. To us, moreover, the Spaniards' indifference to the taking of human life is horrifying. But, I repeat, the ruthlessness of both sides is the inevitable harvest of civil war, a condition which three centuries of island peace have rendered us almost incapable of comprehending.

The war, too, is the principal agent of the social and economic transformation which the body politic has undergone since July 19th. Superficially, with all the talk of *incautación* (requisitioning), collectivization, etc., one hears on every side, especially in Catalonia, one might think that the social revolution was in full swing. When one examines calmly what has happened, however, one realizes that this is just so much froth-blowing. The ordinary processes of trading and finance are still in operation, subject to control by representatives of the Government. The innovation, a considerable one but no more revolutionary than some of our co-partnership schemes, is the existence in every industrial concern of a workers' control committee. In nine cases out of ten the technical experts are gladly co-operating with these improvised managing committees, and managing staffs have frequently stayed on, even at a reduced salary. The latter is a point of "social justice" on which the workers' organizations have insisted.

Apart from a compulsory 15 per cent. increase for all "workers," decreed on August 5th, on the other hand, wages have not been altered, and any pressure for higher rates of pay is formally discountenanced. In cases where the owner of a business has fled the country—having failed to return by the date (August 15th) which was laid down—and there is not enough money available to continue the payment of wages and other costs, the Generalitat (Catalan Government) steps in and advances money on a mortgage basis. Obviously this expedient cannot be carried on indefinitely. When I asked Don Luis Companys, the President of Catalonia, however, what would happen when the State funds began to run dry, he answered rather testily that all these questions of monetary adjustment could be left until after the war, the immediate question was to suppress the "Fascist"

insurrection. As we know, war-time finance is something *sui generis*. It is duly authorized by Article 44 of the Constitution. That 15 per cent. wage increase, by the way, is paid in by the individual workers to their trade union headquarters to be used for financing the needs of the militia. And everywhere, in field and factory, there is no stinting of effort to supply materials and munitions for the front.

The commandeering of all private cars, the temporary occupation of private villas or club-houses the property of persons or organizations implicated in the rebellion, and certain food and rent restrictions, are likewise war-measures which have no specific connection with the social revolution. Confiscation of the property or estates of persons implicated in the rebellion is the only *political* measure, and one which could hardly be omitted.

To the business man whose job is buying and selling these new conditions are no doubt a nightmare, unless his firm is engaged on some war industry *But they are the fruits of the war*. Professional men, on the other hand, lawyers, doctors, architects, etc., whose sense of the sanctity of private property is not so hyper-developed, have no difficulty in adapting themselves. There are, of course, exceptions. A doctor of some distinction in Madrid, former holder of a Rockefeller grant, assured me that, though he had been a liberal all his life, he could not really side with a regime which had allowed the fundamental principle of authority to be trampled in the dust. When I ventured to suggest that the Right must bear the responsibility, since it was they who had opened the sluices by illegal rebellion, he began to introduce the well-worn theme of the "rebellion of the masses" between February and July. (I discovered later that he was a small landowner in Galicia, a fact which to some extent coloured his views.) He complained that the workers were totally unfitted to have positions of responsibility and power because they are "without culture," that a long process of education was necessary before the country could be entrusted to them. That attitude of mind I recognize so well, the point of view of the expert with the highest standards who forgets, unfortunately, that the age of democracy is already here, whether we like it or not.

It was that same doctor's younger brother, whom I met casually in the street, who supplied the key to the situation—as it affects



the Spanish middle class with liberal antecedents and traditions. "Some of the older men, you will find," he said, "are so terrified of the workers running amok that they have ruefully come to welcome a victory for the military-agrarian classes as a lesser evil. But in every case they are men with marked aristocratic affiliations, i.e., men who have stood outside the social impetus of the past six years. Their lot in the present period of upheaval is an unhappy one, because they lack that intimate bond of confidence which is the secret of the present remarkable co-operation in the anti-Fascist cause. Only those who have faith in the capacity of the people to build up that 'republic of workers of every class,' proudly affirmed in Article I of the Constitution, are with us to-day."

That there are wide sections of the Spanish *bourgeoisie* who have this faith I can testify. It is why I am sure that the insurgent Generals at most can only win the first round.

These conditions are not understood in England. The other day in Barcelona a Catalan friend was turning over with me the latest English newspapers. "Your commentators," he said, "unlike the French, give no evidence of really *living* this crucial phase of Spanish history. Kipling's islanders still, a maddening aloofness and complacency impels them to look down as from a great height upon the pitiable spectacle of a nation which, as Sir Samuel Hoare suggested in his speech at Gunton Park on August 19th, has allowed its political life to degenerate into the armed clash of two "factions." And, both on the Right and Left, the struggle is being interpreted in terms from the British political lexicon which are largely irrelevant."

The reproach, I think, is wholly justified. However admirable in detail, the effect of manifold reports and articles has been to present Spain's bloody reckoning in a false perspective. The British public still fails to appreciate that this is no mere desperate effort of the propertied classes to avoid spoliation by "the rabble." With few exceptions the interests of industrial capitalism are bound up with the regime of the People's Front. This is particularly noticeable in the Basque provinces whose Statute of Autonomy was formally approved by the Spanish Parliament on October 1st. (It is worth pointing out, by the way, that in that same territory, so far as it is under the control

of the Government, there has been no instance of those "anti-Christian" activities which have caused such heartburning over here. There the ecclesiastical authorities had refrained from playing politics, with the result that throughout the past three months the churches have been open—and full—and priests have been going about their customary work without the slightest molestation.) The true line of demarcation in Spain today is between those who aspire to the democratic renovation expressed, however imperfectly, in the Constitution of December 9th, 1931, and those who wish to maintain the privileges of that rural feudalism which had been governing Spain for centuries before that date, supported by those elements of the nation that, consciously or unconsciously, repudiate the whole principle of popular government. By sheer military superiority, the forces converging on Madrid as I write may win their victory. They may well have done so before these words appear in print. But that is by no means the end. We shall not begin to understand what General Franco and his motley following are up against until we realize that the struggle has little or nothing to do with "Fascism" or "Communism," that it is essentially one between the spiritual and intellectual forces of liberalism, these indeed harnessed to twentieth-century social and economic factors presaging a Workers' State, and the tenacious hierarchies of "the old Spain."

The reasons for British misapprehension of the issues at stake are many. In the first place, let us admit, British ignorance of Spanish affairs and the historical background of day-to-day news items before the civil war was lamentable. Because Spain was regarded as off the map of international politics editors were loth to spend money on proper representation in Madrid or Barcelona. For the Foreign Office, too, Spain was utterly unimportant. Thus the present instalment of Mediterranean mischief caught both official and newspaper worlds unawares. A corps of special correspondents hastily despatched to pick up what they could from Hendaye or Gibraltar or from the actual battle fronts could hardly be expected to fathom in a few weeks the Spaniard's amazing "facility for changing the face of fact"—if I may borrow a phrase from the admirable article by Lawrence Fernsworth in the September FORTNIGHTLY. They *are* likely, on the other hand,



to produce far more worthwhile "stories" than the correspondents in Madrid or Barcelona operating under a more than usually imbecile censorship.

A more fundamental difficulty arises from that very stability of social and political life on which we English are accustomed to pride ourselves. Three centuries of ordered progress, with the settled habits of thought engendered thereby, have so numbed our imaginations that, while both Mr. Eden and Sir Walter Citrine descant on the blessings of liberty and democracy—and the words trip so easily from their tongues—in practice a narrow if intelligible fellow-feeling for Spain's patrician class blots out the sympathy that is due to the Spanish people in their struggle for liberty (as we understood it in the seventeenth century) and the rights of the many. Let it be granted that an angry populace placed by circumstances in a position of power is not a comfortable experience, and that in the stress of war and revolution, the twin deities now athirst for the country's life-blood, ugly things are happening. When, however, those whose professional function it was to guarantee the community's security resorted to criminal rebellion, what else could the State have done than "arm the workers?"

Few of the British community in Spain that has registered its disgust at Spanish lawlessness are qualified to pronounce judgment, because, though resident in the material sense, they do not really live Spanish life, they do not enter into the Spaniards' spiritual domain. Normally, it may be said, this insulation from what is going on around them is of no account, it is just their loss. Actually, as recent events have shown, it may have the most serious consequences. For it is upon the reports and "experience" of these latter-day Simon Stylites that our rulers rely for their knowledge about Spain. From the outset in British official and business circles the victory of the insurgent forces has been desired and discounted—as latterly the fall of Madrid: but when one knows the extent to which these wiseacres are cut off from the real Spain that is fighting for its life, one may be pardoned for distrusting their pose of superior knowledge. Many of them do not even speak the language of the country whose evolution they are registering.

The net result is that, without exaggeration, our Government

at home has been more misled about the Spanish maelstrom than about any large-scale event since the Russian Revolution.

The various elements of the People's Front, ranging from the Basque Nationalists, who are Catholics and conservatives but democrats, to the Communists and syndicalists, are more united than ever. The middle-class Republicans appreciate that theirs is the delicate responsibility of canalizing this characteristic Spanish surge. The Communists are emphatic—and perfectly sincere—in bestowing their blessing on small property-holders and in championing their creed *within the framework of the Frente Popular*. Spain's peril is not from this side at all. It is from the Imperialist ambitions of those anti-democratic Powers which have so shamelessly violated the non-intervention pact. The longer the grim civil war continues, the clearer that will become, and the greater condemnation it will be of the ostrich policy of the National Government, which was assessed so charitably in this Review last month by Mr. F. A. Voigt.



## THE ANGELIC SHEPHERD

BY LORD DUNSANY

I DON'T wish to say anything in public which might appear to be a criticism of the committee of the Billiards Club.

There was a space on the wall of the staircase that no doubt needed filling, and the committee bought a print. It is framed and hung up now. I am not writing this with the intention of making any comment upon the print. It was a print of one of Woodler's pictures, which beyond any doubt are of high educational value ; the only question that may arise is as to whether they are quite suited to our club.

Well, I chanced to be coming up the stairs with Jorkens one day, when he stopped in front of this print ; at first, I think, in order to get breath, and it was while he was doing this that he made to me his comment upon the print, as I stood waiting behind him. It was, like all Woodler's pictures, a biblical scene ; there were ninety-nine sheep in the foreground, carefully counted, while a little further off on the rocky sky-line, with the hundredth coming towards him, a shepherd was seated ; the suggestion that the shepherd was an angel was expressed by an upward sweep of fleecy clouds that slanted away in the sky behind each of his shoulders and tapered to delicate points like enormous wings.

"An interesting picture," said Jorkens.

"Oh, ah, yes," I said ; as one often does at the club, before conversation gets going.

"It's a spiritual face," said Jorkens.

"Well, yes," I said, "it's spiritual but . . ." You see I found it a trifle didactic for my taste.

"I knew the man," said Jorkens.

"The shepherd ?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he said. "I knew him. They have very spiritual faces, a great many of those tribesmen. It was Woodler's last picture, you know."

I knew that : it was widely advertised.

"Woodler knew where to go for spiritual types," Jorkens continued. "It wasn't Palestine that time, but the North-West frontier of India, in fact the Khyber ; and quite the sort of country for Woodler's pictures."

"But you say you knew the man in the picture ?" I asked.

"Yes," said Jorkens, "I saw him once quite close, and I know his story."

"Story ? Story ?" said Terbut, coming up the staircase behind us. "What ? Another of them ?"

We had had a good many stories from Jorkens during the last week ; stories that I have not given to the public, on account of certain technicalities, trivial and unimportant in themselves, and yet requiring certain investigations before I am actually able to vouch for them.

"Yes, if you like," said Jorkens. "I just happened to have met the shepherd in that picture."

"You aren't going to try to convert me or anything ?" said Terbut.

"No, no," said Jorkens, "too late for that. But I'll tell you about the shepherd."

"What about him ?" said Terbut.

And then Jorkens started. "There was a time," he said, "when I used to be rather keen on handling a business deal. There are a good many deals that are put down in black and white upon paper, and are duly signed and witnessed, and done through the post. That was not so much the kind of deal I was interested in. All the more interesting deals, as it seemed to me, are the deals that more depend on a hint that one man lets drop, and that ultimately develop according to the way that the hint is taken up by some other man. That gives one a good large scope for employment of one's initiative, and it was consequently the kind of deal that attracted me. It was a deal of that nature, between an Afghan gentleman and a man in the City of London, whom I will not call exactly a gentleman, but who was none the worse for that, that took me once to the far end of the Khyber. As a matter of fact the deal never went through, as the London man got frightened at the way in which his clerk had been keeping his books ; mere untidiness, I think ; but it frightened him.



Well, I was going along the Khyber in a car, with a man who knew the country, a man called Pieters, when we happened to see this man walk out of his house—the man in the picture, I mean. I was struck even then, at first sight, by his spiritual look, as he slipped out of his house with his rifle, and started up the pass with that quick glance in his face that told you he had a perfect eye for cover. And then Pieters told me his story. The house we had seen him come from was his home, and he lived there with two wives. I should perhaps describe the house to you: it was unmistakably two things; first of all, it was a cottage, a cottage with a little yard at the back; its size, its poverty, the chickens running about all over the yard stamped it as obviously that; equally it was a castle; the wall of the yard was battlemented, the cottage ran to a little tower which had battlements too, and all the windows were loop-holes. It was whitewashed and stood by the road, an island of habitation in a desert savage with rock and heat and, but for the road, loneliness.

“Well, I said to Pieters, ‘That’s a fine-looking man.’

“And he said, ‘Yes. And it’s a fine coat he’s wearing.’

“And I looked and saw it was fur.

“‘A fur coat!’ I exclaimed. ‘And in this weather.’

“‘Yes,’ he said. ‘They call it a poshteen. They make them out of sheep-skins. Their sheep aren’t woolly, they have brown hair like that. They sew them together with the bare skin on the outside, and ornament it with gay silk. That of course is a particularly fine one.’

“‘But why’s he wearing it in this weather?’ I asked.

“‘Well, that’s because he’s just got it,’ said Pieters. ‘He’s proud of it, you see. And proud of the way he got it.’

“‘How did he get it?’ I asked.

“‘Well, that’s quite a story,’ said Pieters. ‘You see, this isn’t England.’

“Well, I knew that. I shouldn’t have been engaged on that particular deal if it had been.”

“What was the deal?” asked Terbut.

“Private business,” said Jorkens.

“I see,” said Terbut.

“So I said to Pieters, ‘Tell me the story.’

“And he told it me just as we passed Shargai on our left,

a little fort that gave me the impression of an oven let into the side of the hill, or a lime-kiln, or something hot like that. After Shargai tiny huts of stone on the tops of the hills watch the road, one every two miles or so. Men in favour of civilization live in them, and enforce that curious creed as far as their rifles can carry, among the rocks of the Khyber, where it somehow seems as out-of-place as a daisy.

“ ‘ You see, he had two wives,’ Pieters said, ‘ and they all lived in that whitewashed hovel in squalor and poverty. They didn’t mind the squalor, but the wives got tired of the poverty. So they both began to goad him to go out with his rifle and get some sheep. One of them goaded him straight out to go and raid a flock from a neighbour, and the other indirectly, but with equal effect, told him that his wishes were her code of laws, even though he wished to live in unnecessary and undignified poverty.’ ”

“ How did Pieters know what this man’s wives said to him ? ” asked Terbut.

“ He wouldn’t tell me that,” replied Jorkens.

“ No,” said Terbut thoughtfully.

“ Well,” said Jorkens, “ after a few weeks of this sort of thing, Abdullah—that was his name, it means the slave of God—got together two or three friends and went out and raided a flock of sheep, just as his wives had said. A short stalk, a little shooting, and the flock of sheep was his. Of course he divided them honourably with his friends. Now, it was just at this time, coming back with his flock of sheep, that Woodler, the artist, met him. Pieters actually saw the incident. Abdullah was striding by with the look of deep satisfaction on his face that came not only from the success of his raid, but from the knowledge that he would have peace in his cottage or castle at last ; and Woodler was rushing towards him waving his arms, and compelling him to see, by a superabundance of signs, that he must stop and be painted. At this time Woodler was not wearing his poshteen, but it was late in the evening by the time the painting was finished, as you can see from the picture ; and Woodler must have unpacked his poshteen and put it on to keep warm, because the cold comes down very quickly, at sunset, up in the Khyber.



"Abdullah had sat, with his sheep all about him, just as you see in the picture, and with that look of serene satisfaction, bland on his face. That hundredth sheep, Pieters thinks, must have been the leader of another lot that one of Abdullah's friends was bringing in. And everything would have been all right for Woodler, Pieters said, if it had not been for that poshteen. But Woodler was making a good deal of money in those days, and he had bought one of the best poshteens that they had in Peshawar, a marvel of work in pale-orange silk all over the sheepskins, and the long brown hair inside. It was very likely the labour of months. Whatever it was, Abdullah would have known the value of it better than poor Woodler, and was quite unable to resist the temptation to be clothed, himself, in its splendours. So he must have shot Woodler, about the time that the picture was finished. At any rate Woodler was found without his coat, and with a bullet through his heart, and the famous picture there on its easel, all alone in the Khyber. As far as Woodler's reputation goes, the bullet came just at the right time; for he could never have improved that look on the face of the angel, or shepherd, or whatever you like to call him, and with any more work he would only have spoiled it, as artists often do."

"But what did they do to Abdullah?" Terbut asked.

"Well, you see," said Jorkens, "the unfortunate thing about that was that it didn't happen on the road. The really unfortunate thing was that Woodler didn't know anything about the customs of the Khyber. Nobody shoots anybody on the road, whereas off the road it's quite different. He might as well have set up his easel on a main road in England, as off the road in the Khyber. If he sat on the tarmac in England he would of course be killed at once. But it's the other way round in the Khyber."

## WILL AUSTRIA BECOME GERMAN?

BY ELIZABETH WISKEMANN

**B**EFORE the Nazis we were brought up to believe that one of the signs of Bismarck's greatness was the moderation with which he behaved after the Prussian victory over Austria in 1866. Territorially Austria suffered no loss whatever, and it is generally considered that this ensured her neutrality in 1870 and an early alliance between Austria and the new German Empire of 1871. To-day, however, Nazi school-teachers have another tale to tell, the tale of Bismarck's faults. He made two great mistakes, the children learn; for he failed to persecute the Jews, and, far from achieving an all-embracing union of the Germans, he sanctioned their division.

Now Bismarck considered the old Danubian monarchy of the Habsburgs to be a European necessity, and he had no intention of breaking it up in 1866. To the National Socialist of to-day as to the Pan-German of yesterday, it is because Bismarck regrettably lost this great opportunity that Austrian and Reich Germans are not yet united in one Great-German state, and that the Bohemian Germans have been subjected, since 1919, to the un-German yoke of the Czechs. It is therefore one of the immediate Nazi aims—though internationally it is only negatively avowed—to “free” the Austrians and the Bohemian Germans by attaching them to the German Reich. At the end of the World War, both groups of people expressed their desire to be joined to Germany, and were, in the Nazi view, cheated of their emancipation through nothing but the malice of the then victorious Powers, who, from that day to this, have maintained an unrighteous veto against the fulfilment of German national unity.

The National Socialist case was a strong one until the National Socialists became the rulers of the Reich. But it should perhaps be observed, parenthetically, that there were powerful elements, not only in Paris or Prague, but also in Germany, who opposed a union with the Germans of Austria and Bohemia because it



would have added a Catholic population of between nine and ten millions to Germany, a change upon which many Protestant North Germans would have looked rather askance. Until 1933 Germany was a federal state, but since Hitler has been her dictator she has become rigidly centralized. It is this which transforms the question of the ex-Habsburg Germans. For while many Austrians wish to be federally attached to Germany, it is fairly certain that only a small minority would wish to come under the executive power of Berlin; even the Bohemian Germans, who were always famous for their violently German feelings, would dislike the loss of the individuality of their group. With the question of centralization goes the religious question. The Catholic minority in Germany was only able to defend itself politically while the Catholic states could preserve a certain autonomy; the Catholics, certainly in Austria, would always wish to preserve Austrian Home Rule, more especially since the centralized Berlin régime has revealed itself as essentially hostile to the ideology of the Catholic Church.

It is, of course, only since 1933 that Germany, possessed with passionate racialism, has launched a grand offensive in the direction of Austria and Czechoslovakia. This campaign is fought, like all National Socialist battles hitherto, by propaganda. The German wireless has enthusiastically condemned the governments, both in Vienna and Prague, for their "oppression" of those who are fighting for Germany's freedom in the German sense of national unification. No one familiar with Central European affairs can doubt that money from the Reich has flowed fairly freely into the safes of the German racialists in both Austria and Czechoslovakia; it has sometimes been contributed directly from the Nazi treasury at Munich, and, in the case of the Bohemian Germans to-day, it comes from the Verein der Deutschen im Ausland (Society of Germans in Foreign Countries). The fires thus kindled have flared up into a considerable conflagration, but while the consequent tension between Berlin and Vienna was eased by the Austro-German Agreement of last July, the question of the Bohemian Germans appears incapable of even a temporary solution.

On July 11th, contrary to Nazi doctrine, Germany agreed to recognize Austria's sovereignty and to remove the thousand

mark tax by which, since 1933, she had prevented her nationals from visiting Austria. Austria declared that her policy would always in principle be that of a German state ; she also promised a large-scale amnesty for Nazi prisoners in Austria. It was agreed that, whereas since 1934 Germany and Austria had virtually banned one another's newspapers *en masse*, they would each henceforth admit a specified five.

Superficially this was Adolf Hitler's Canossa. An Austrian by birth, he had hitherto regarded as inadmissible the divorce of German Austria from the German Reich, and had always demanded a plebiscite in Austria as the condition for coming to any agreement. While it is difficult to find anyone in Central Europe who believes that the German Chancellor's views have in any way changed, it is easy to discover a number of explanations for his sudden surrender on July 11th. Some sort of temporary solution of the Austrian question could kill two large birds with one stone. To call off the quarrel with Austria facilitated co-operation with Italy and at the same time made a good impression in England, distracting attention from the offensive behaviour of the President of the Danzig Senate at Geneva on July 4th. Further than this, the Agreement with Austria was accompanied by implicit undertakings favourable to Germany. While Austria had always underlined the German quality of her régime, it was now implied that she would enter into consultative relations with Germany over all questions of foreign policy. One pro-German, a Gross-deutscher in the sense of regarding an Austro-German fusion as natural and desirable, was taken into the Austrian Cabinet, and it was implied that further appointments of this kind would be made. The new Austrian Minister, Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, who had helped to negotiate the Agreement, has well-known Reichswehr connections, and there is little doubt that the Austrian General Staff will now work closely with that of Germany rather than with that of Italy.

If the Agreement brings only the military *Gleichschaltung* of Austria it becomes easier to explain Germany's concessions ; the hope that the Austrian Cabinet would be partially nazified, and therefore obedient to that of Berlin, goes further still to explain the Agreement. But it can be still more easily explained. It is one of the tenets of Pan-Germanism and of National



Socialism that economic conquest, as in the case of the German Customs Union of the early nineteenth century, should prepare the way for political annexation. At present only the question of the tourist traffic to Austria has been settled, but Germany hopes that, as opportunities occur, Austria will curtail her coal imports from Czechoslovakia and Poland, and take Ruhr coal instead. It is, of course, not a question of coal alone. Through Austria's desire for tourists, Germany may be able to force a general increase of imports from Germany. This would be an important step towards drawing Austria away from unfriendly Slavonic countries and identifying her interests with those of Germany; a Customs Union, as proposed in 1931, is not yet spoken of.

Lastly, the Germans believe that their propaganda will be rather facilitated than not. The five Austrian newspapers are not such as to play any part in Germany, and they are legally forbidden to print large-type headlines. The five German papers are both better known and more effectively got-up. The German tourists, who receive sufficient foreign exchange to stay any time in Austria, will be expected to play a propagandist role. This is definitely stated in, for instance, a letter dated July 15th, 1936, which was circulated among its members by the official Nazi Students' Union of Germany. The letter described the Austro-German agreement as a Pyrrhic victory for Schuschnigg since the Nazi prisoners he would free would now be able to mobilize their strength against him. The fight for Austria, the letter says, will continue, but on an ideological basis. Among the immediate aims are enumerated the education of tourists, the nazification of Austrian school-teachers (they are already largely Nazi in the secondary schools) and, above all, steady pressure against all forms of Catholic organization. For such purposes the universities must be the arena; Austrian and German students study at each other's universities, and it is suggested that special *Stosstrupps* or fighting groups must be built up among the Austrian students. This letter, whose recent publication in Austria caused embarrassment in Germany, is undoubtedly genuine, and may be regarded as a fairly exact statement of the German point of view. It deserves rather more attention than it has received.

It cannot yet be foretold how all this will work out in Austria. There are still important feelings and interests opposed to Germany, especially the centralized expansionist Germany of to-day. Many Austrians continue to regard the Reich Germans as aggressive and uncivilized. Just after the first German tourists had arrived, one heard Austrians in the corridors of trains whispering to each other : " Too many German brothers in that compartment," and so on. Frontier feeling still exists, and near the frontiers the Austrians know very well about food scarcity in Germany. In general the old mainly legitimist aristocracy is as anti-German as the Socialist and Communist town working-class, which can still be estimated as about 30 per cent. of the population. Schuschnigg himself has become anxious as to what Germany really intends, and seems unlikely to stick to the unwritten promises.

Finally there is a good deal of feeling that economically only the Germans will gain from closer Austro-German co-operation. Austria will lose markets elsewhere if she gains them in Germany, while Germany will obtain a new outlet. Austrian industrialists tend to be anti-German if closer association with Germany would bring them powerful rivals ; the big iron interests, on the other hand, welcome any increasing accessibility to the German market where armament materials are still hungrily bought.

Agricultural interests are, of course, pro-German, since the great German towns should supply a suitable market for their produce ; the timber people, especially, hope for a big increase of their exports. In general it may be said that the big majority of young people is all for Nazi Germany without the formulation of any more precise programme. Only a small proportion, probably, are doctrinaire Nazis, for, even among *soi-disant* Nazis in Austria, the dominant notion is that Austria would always remain autonomous within the Nazi Reich, a notion which is unlikely to win the acceptance of Berlin. Among older people the *Gross-deutsch* sentiment is widespread. In spite of the persecution of Roman Catholicism within Germany itself, many Austrian Catholics, attracted by Hitler's anti-Bolshevist campaign, accept the *Gross-deutsch* standpoint. Dr. Funder, the editor of the Catholic *Reichspost*, is the chief protagonist of this view,



and, through his association with Herr von Papen, contributed substantially to the Agreement in July. The Protestant Church in Austria is numerically weak, but while Hitler persecutes Protestantism in the Reich, strangely enough the Protestant pastors in Austria work almost as eagerly for the Hitlerist idea as the Secret S.S. and S.A. organizations. Members of these, not satisfied with mere anti-clericalism, in Austria take care to be ostentatiously converted to Protestantism; in Lamprechts-hausen in the province of Salzburg, for instance, 26 Nazis released under the amnesty after July 11th immediately celebrated their freedom by an instantaneous conversion from Catholicism to the Protestant faith.

Statistically Austria's economic situation has been gradually improving since 1933, and yet, as M. Rost van Tonningen remarked in his last report before he resigned the position of financial representative of the League of Nations in Vienna, the unemployment figure remains rather inexplicably very much the same. This is partly due to the deflationary policy of Dr. Kienböck, the President of the Austrian National Bank, a policy which has been accompanied by a striking reduction of state expenditure upon work creation schemes and social needs in 1936 as compared with 1935. Working people become more bitter as time goes on and they gain nothing from the increasing activity of heavy industry. A few of them accept National Socialism, but among the townspeople of Austria the number of Nazi converts is astoundingly small.

In the country of the Bohemian Germans—the *Sudeten-deutschen*, as they are usually called, after a local mountain range—the people's misery has the opposite effect; they embrace the local brand of National Socialism with blind and desperate enthusiasm. Anyone who knows the country in which they live, districts thick with glass, china, textile and many other factories, easily realizes that, without any political or racial complications, the slump has inevitably transformed this exporting region into an appallingly distressed area. It is only too natural that the German population should regard the present position as entirely due to the greed and injustice of the Czechs. Believing that the Czechs are to blame, the *Sudetendeutschen* of all classes have easily embraced the fashionable doctrine of

German racialism. A leader, Konrad Henlein, emerged some three years ago, who, while declaring his loyalty to the Czechoslovak state, insisted that its German-speaking citizens could only defend themselves by holding more closely together—*qua* Germans—in a racially conscious group or *Volksgemeinschaft*. Thus organized, they must effectively press for justice with regard to employment of all kinds.

Whether Konrad Henlein has proved a satisfactory saviour is at present rather doubtful. With the Hitler régime just across the frontier, the Czechs could scarcely fail to regard the Henlein movement as suspiciously Hitlerist in its methods and propaganda; anti-Semitism and totalitarian phraseology seemed to them contrary to the principles of the Czechoslovak democracy, to which Henlein declared himself to be true. Henlein has, moreover, proved himself to be weak; all this year quarrels between the leaders of his party have been apparent. The quarrels do not probably disturb the rank and file of the party, but they strengthen the influence of the extremist group which is frankly disloyal to Prague and works closely with Pan-German Nazis in the Reich.

Despite the efforts of President Benes and his Premier, Dr. Hodza, it is probably true that the *Sudetendeutsch* territory must be increasingly regarded as an irreconcilable irredenta. It cannot be questioned that in the past the Czechs have been guilty of unfair discrimination against their German fellow-citizens; the chauvinism of small local officials has undoubtedly ignored German minority rights. During this year further discrimination has become logically inevitable. Should the armaments race, in which Germany is still rushing ahead, lead to war in the not far off future, it is generally agreed that Czechoslovakia is in the greatest danger of German attack. Bohemia will be extraordinarily difficult to defend. It seems that the Czechoslovaks mean to relinquish even Bohemia only after a struggle, and it is natural that they should be introducing Czech workmen into the frontier districts in order to have people there upon whom they can rely; it is also natural that they should be partially transferring industry into Slovakia. Both these things mean less work for German workmen.

Last January the Czechoslovak Defence Ministry issued an



order to the effect that firms executing Government contracts were to employ German and Czech workmen in the same proportions as the local population and that workmen belonging to organizations hostile to the state must be dismissed. This decree has done much to exacerbate the relations between Czechs and Germans, and has formed the subject of the *Sudetendeutsch* appeal to Geneva this autumn. The Germans claim that it has only been sent to German firms which, since they cannot afford to take on more workmen, will be forced to dismiss some of their German employees. The Czechoslovak Government declare that it is to apply to Czech and German firms alike and that it is not to be at all vigorously carried through. This withdrawal from a false step taken by the Defence Minister, M. Machnik, is too late to assuage the bitter resentments it has stimulated. On the other hand if the Czechoslovaks have reason to believe that the Sudeten Germans are disloyal, and friendly to a Germany whose outspoken hostility was re-emphasized at Nuremberg this year, they cannot be expected to take no measures against them.

At the beginning Hitler attempted a direct onslaught against Austria and left the *Sudetendeutschen* to react to contagion. Now he has reversed his methods ; Austria is to be won by seduction, but Czechoslovakia is to be faced with intransigence. Even if a Czech-German bilateral pact came to be signed, nobody would believe in it. It is as if Hitler were determined not merely to detach the Sudeten country, but to destroy the whole Czechoslovak state. A vicious circle is thus created. The more Hitler's armaments and speeches threaten Czechoslovakia, the more intolerantly Czechoslovakia is bound to behave towards her German citizens—the majority of whom show sympathy for the Reich on every occasion—and the more acute becomes the problem of the Germans within the Czechoslovak state.

## PARADISE LOST

BY JAN STRUTHER

THE flat golden tonking of a hundred sheep-bells came floating down upon me like a shower of pebbles through the indigo depths of sleep. I stirred, clung instinctively to oblivion for a moment, then let myself drift slowly up to the surface of another Balearic day.

I knew by the sheep-bells that it could not be more than five o'clock, but the room was already flooded with sunlight and the black and white marble squares of the floor felt warm to my bare feet as I walked over to the window. The sheep by now were about to pass below me, their jostling backs merged into one white woolly cumulus as though a cloud had fallen out of the cloudless sky. Their hoofs made a twittering sound upon the sun-baked mud of the road ; the clangour of the bells rose in a confused crescendo, sagged a little in passing, and faded away along the quay, leaving a trail of wakefulness behind it.

The fishermen were just returning from the night's work, lowering sail as they rounded the jetty. A few of them had already come ashore and were beginning to spread out their nets in symmetrical patterns on the hot flags of the quay. The wall-eyed puppy with the lame leg was chewing at the corks and tangling the nets up as fast as the fishermen could lay them out, until one of them gave him a good-natured clout and sent him squealing and yapping across the road. And that woke the other dogs, and the dogs woke their owners, and the baker's wife next door began to sing one of those endless wandering songs of hers, and soon the whole village was astir, as though someone had dropped a coin into a penny-in-the-slot machine. With a pang I remembered that it was our last day. Not a moment of it must be wasted, so I slipped along the passage to wake the others. I noticed how brown and polished their arms looked against the matt whiteness of the sheets.



When we got downstairs there was nobody about except Blond Dog. He, as usual, was sitting at his desk in the hall, gazing out with prominent blue eyes across the bay. So far as I know he never went to bed. By the exercise of what we had learnt in a fortnight to call typical Blond-Doggery he had managed to have our picnic lunch ready for us before breakfast, and that, in Spanish territory, takes genius.

"You have a beautiful day," said Blond Dog, as we drank our coffee.

"All days are beautiful in Miramosa," we responded. Somehow one can say things like that in Spanish, even if one knows how to say little else.

"Your last one," he mentioned tactlessly.

"Don't rub it in," we said (but in English this time, for idioms are tricky things). "*We don't want to go.*"

"Then why not stay?" said Blond Dog. He made it sound so delightfully simple.

"How can we? We have work to do in England."

"But look," said Blond Dog, "at the Señor Thompson. He came here for a holiday ten years ago, and he has stayed ever since."

"Alas," we said, "the Señor Thompson probably has private means."

"With the exchange like this, it would cost very little for you to live here."

"Very little. But we must go back nevertheless."

"One spends one's life," said Blond Dog, "being where one would not be." He stared out again across the relentless dancing blue. He had, we knew, a young woman in Barcelona. "There is a house to let," he added irrelevantly. "The second farm after you pass the lighthouse island. It will be going very cheap. The man there has just been arrested for smuggling."

"Come on," said T. "We ought to be off before the sun gets too hot."

"It has a good fig-orchard," said Blond Dog. "And I am told the olives bear well."

"Come on," said T.; and we stepped out into the fresh, blinding sunlight.

We walked past the village shop where you buy tobacco and

stamps and straw sombreros and cheese and rope-soled shoes ; past the tiny rose-red barracks where a Gilbertian garrison lives with its wives and its amber-coloured children ; past the "Fonda-Café," where the soldiers meet in the evening to gamble and play guitars : past the other fonda where the fishermen go and where brandy is three-ha'pence a glass ; past the little white convent whence, later in the day, comes a drone of nuns and schoolchildren ; and so out into the open country.

"Which way ?" said C., who was in front. "Into the hills, or along the coast road ?"

"Coast road," I said. "Past the lighthouse island."

"You're not," said T., "letting Blond Dog put ideas into your head ?"

"It's a nice road," I said. "And it won't do any harm just to have a look at it."

So we took the path by the sea, stopping very often to pick figs. You cannot buy figs in Miramosa. If you try, the peasants smile deprecatingly and give you whole basketfuls of them. The ripe ones are shaken down early every morning for the pigs to eat. It is as though a foreigner came to England and tried to buy acorns.

As E. reached up for a particularly beautiful fig, like a green puffed sleeve slashed with crimson, a book fell out of his pocket. I picked it up.

"Not again ?" I groaned.

"Yes," said E., firmly. "And I'm really going to start on it today."

He had brought *Paradise Lost* with him from England, saying that it was a thing every Englishman ought to have read, and that it was only on a holiday like this that he would ever have the chance of doing so. But on the journey out, of course, none of us read anything but Spanish phrase-books ; and ever since we had arrived at Miramosa fate had been against him. Whenever he settled down and opened it, something happened.

There was, for instance, the evening when he tried to read it after dinner, under the awning, between sips of brandy : but all of a sudden we heard such a curious noise coming from the jetty that there was nothing for it but to go and see what was the matter. What was the matter was a herd of black pigs ; two



men were trying very hard to embark them on to a pig barge, and they were trying still harder not to be embarked. Milton, they say, has a hundred uses, but embarking hysterical pigs is not one of them. What could any man of spirit do but pocket *Paradise Lost* and plunge into the mêlée? The next hour was spent in shoving and pulling at slippery black bodies in a darkness only less black, in tripping over hawsers and barking our shins on crates and bollards. Finally—and small thanks, no doubt, to our help—the gate of the pig barge slammed on the last quivering tail; the swineherd cast off and clung precariously, a dark crouching figure, to the stern of the barge; the tugs got under way, and the whole fantastic cortège set out in the direction of the Barcelona steamer, which lay twinkling far off in the bay. I thought, as the tug receded into the night and the indignant grunting and squealing grew fainter and fainter across the water, of Charon and the Styx, and hoped that the dead embarked with a better grace and with less reluctant rumps.

Then there was the time when he was lying sun-bathing in the sand-dunes. He had skimmed drowsily through the first ten lines or so when one of the Gilbertian carabineros appeared from behind a cactus-bush and accused him of being a smuggler. E. indicated by signs that the amount of clothing he was wearing at that moment would not conceal so much as one pipeful of tobacco. The soldier grinned, spat and offered him a Canarias. To read Milton and smoke Canarias at the same time would be both disrespectful and inartistic, so *Paradise Lost* was again laid aside: a grasshopper came and sunned himself on it, and a little more sand drifted in between its pages. But every day E. hopefully brought it out once more, crammed into his hip-pocket or wedged between the wine and the ensiemadas.

By the time we had passed the lighthouse island the sun had swung high, and long before we reached the first farm the heat had a real bite in it. The first farm was quite near the sea, with a small cove below it. But there was no sand in the cove; the shore just there was all made of dried seaweed—not the crimped, popping kind, nor the broad shiny kind that you hang up as a barometer, but a variety I had never seen before, like chopped straw, brittle, pale brown, and so tightly packed layer on resilient layer that it made a new sort of earth. The sea had worn it

away into miniature gullies, gorges and headlands, so that it looked like a scale model of a wild and rugged coast ; but the water lapping against it made a soft sucking sound quite different from the clean slap and gurgle that it makes against real rocks. Moreover, you could not dive from it, for fear it should crumble away beneath you. So, although our bodies ached to slip into the cool emerald of the water, we decided to push on across the high stony headland to the next cove, where there might be sand.

For an hour we climbed steeply among grey boulders and a tangle of lentiscus. Here and there, like a miracle in a desert, rose the delicate, feathery grey-blue spire of an aloe in full bloom ; and here and there a chocolate-brown goat arranged itself with unconscious artistry upon a crag, silhouetted against blue nothingness, the cynical topaz lozenges of its eyes belying, as is the way with goats, its foolish, amiable mouth. Crickets, those industrious musicians, tuned up hopefully and without respite for a symphony which would never be played ; and small green lizards flickered and darted among the rocks, as though the earth, grown over-hot, had burst spontaneously into little tongues of flame.

On the backbone of the ridge, between its jagged vertebræ, there was a close tufty carpet of aromatic plants—thyme, lavender, southernwood and one or two more whose names I did not know : and on these we threw ourselves down, bruising them into sweetness.

Our climb had brought us at last within sight of the second farm, the one that Blond Dog had so tantalisingly mentioned. It lay below us and a little to the left, on the edge of a narrow arroyo which wound down to a cove of white sand. Its roof was of that gentle slope which comes naturally to builders who have little need to reckon with rain. Its walls were melon-pink. On the seaward side, overlooking the miniature precipice on whose brink it stood, was a wooden arbour or balcony roofed by a vine. Over the low rail of this balcony, and half-way down the face of the cliff, blue convolvulus and magenta bougainvillæa hung in a glowing arras. Behind the house lay a square sun-baked farmyard surrounded by a cactus hedge ; behind that again, an orchard of laden fig-trees ; and above the fig-line the olive-terraces began.

For some minutes we lay silent, getting back our breath and taking in every detail of the scene. Then E. looked at C., and I looked at T., and we all began talking at once.

"But it's madness to go home . . ."

"I wonder how much that olive-crop is worth?"

"Blond Dog said one could live on a peseta a day . . ."

"There would be room for all the children . . ."

And then we turned towards the farm again and discovered further delights. It was E. who pointed out that there was a clump of almonds at the foot of the little cliff, so that in spring one would be looking at the sea across a cloud of blossom. And T., I think, was the one who first noticed the pig-sty. It was a very exceptional pig-sty. It had an oleander on one side of it and a pomegranate on the other, and it, too, was canopied with a growing vine. The pig, unimpressed, snored in the sun.

As we watched, an old man with cropped hair and a middle-aged woman with a yard-long plait—the father and wife, we judged, of the man who was in prison—came out on to the balcony and laid the table for their midday meal. We could make out a loaf, pimientos, a bottle of wine and a great steaming bowl of what was probably *arroz marinera*. The sight was too much for us: we got to our feet, shouldered the food baskets and scrambled as quickly as possible down the other side of the headland to have a bathe before lunch.

"Perhaps the bathing'll be rotten," I said hopefully. "Sea-urchins and jelly-fish. That'll put us off for good and all."

But the bathing was relentlessly perfect. Fine hard sand sloped gently, for those who liked gradual immersion, into water unbelievably green: while for those who did not, a ledge of volcanic rock ran out conveniently on either side. The sea was so clear that even from the furthest end of the ledge it looked scarcely deep enough for diving, and the tenuous green fronds which grew on the bottom seemed almost within arm's reach: but we took a sounding with string and found that they were eighteen feet away. T. had a terrifying experience: he was pursued by a huge dark shape with waving tentacles; the faster he swam the faster it followed, behind and a little below him. His blood, he admitted afterwards, ran cold; and it was not



until he had almost reached the shore that he discovered he was fleeing from his own shadow on the sea's floor.

Sprawling in the shade of the rocks with our feet in the sun, we ate enormously. Blond Dog had surpassed himself. Besides the usual sandwiches, ensiemadas, goat-cheese, grapes and wine, he had risen to a whole melon and some excellent tinned squid. We finished the lot, slept for three hours, and woke up encrusted with a mosaic of tiny shells. As we brushed them off we became aware of their minuteness and perfection. Not one of them was more than an eighth of an inch long. There were some which in shape, colour and transparency could only be compared with babies' finger-nails; there were spirals of every kind—flattened whorls of canary yellow, shallow pointed cones with a rainbow sheen, and slender white spires like the ivory towers of Lilliput. There were cockles so small that the naked eye could hardly see their flutings; diminutive blue-black mussels like inky tear-drops; and a multitude of unknown ones, fragile as fallen petals, saffron, rose, amethyst and palest green.

When we at last raised our eyes from this absorbing task, we saw that we were not alone in the cove. A boy of about twelve, presumably the son of the arrested farmer, had walked past us while we slept and was fishing unconcernedly from the rocks. He must have been there some time, for his rod, a roughly trimmed reed-cane, was lying on the sand beside a bunch of small rainbow-coloured fish, strung together through the gills, as brilliant as a nosegay of mixed flowers. He was now practising, with great precision, another branch of his art. He carried a long narrow piece of lath with a small fish lashed uncomfortably to one end of it like a fixed bayonet. This he thrust downwards under the overhanging ledge, and three times out of four brought it up with a crab clinging to the helpless, but one hoped unconscious, fish.

"Buenas!" we shouted, and he echoed it with a beautiful flashing grin. But it turned out to be nearly all the Spanish he knew, and none of us could speak the island language: so it was by signs, mostly, that we bought, for half a peseta, four of his fish—not because we were hungry, but because we wanted the fun of lighting a fire and cooking them in wet paper. The boy stood and watched us, his faded blue cotton trousers rolled to the

knee, his toes sticking out through his ragged alpargatas. To our great pride, the wet-paper technique was new to him; and when the last of the three thicknesses was charred through, revealing the fish done to a turn, he clapped his hands in delight and uttered, unmistakably, the island word for "Attaboy."

We gave him one of the fish, which he ate with approval. In return, he opened a rusty knife, ran back to the rocks, pried off a sea-urchin (there were few, and none underfoot) and brought it carefully back; setting it up edgewise on a flat stone, he cracked it all round with the knife as though it were an egg, threw away the squirming lower half and offered us, with grave courtesy, the upper—an exquisitely-patterned bowl in which lay, star-fashion, five slips of coral-pink flesh. There was nothing for it: we scooped out and swallowed one each, and he himself disposed of the last. He was a charming child, and we felt that whatever happened he would have to be let with the farm. After all, he was no younger than Guillermo, the miniature under-waiter at our hotel: and in his spare time he could keep us supplied with fish.

We did not bathe again, for the sun was already round the headland and off the water. We dowsed the fire with sand, shouldered our lightened baskets, and said good-bye to the brown boy: his hand was thin, supple and surprisingly cool.

"Hasta la vista," we said, and we really meant to come back: but he, with instinctive wisdom, replied "Adios."

At the top of the ridge we emerged once more into the sunshine, which was now flooding horizontally from the south-west. The lighthouse island was stencilled in bramble-black on a gold-leaf sea. We turned to have one more look at the cove. Two uniformed figures were strolling across it with blankets and rifles slung on their shoulders, while a young Alsatian bounded along in front: it was a pair of carabinieri setting off on their night-patrol. Suddenly one of them gave a howl of pain and clapped his hand to the back of his neck. They both spun round, unslinging their rifles: but the cove was apparently empty and the dog's clumsy rangings had no success. It was only we, with our god's-eye view, who could see the brown boy lying as still as a cat along the branch of a carob-tree a few yards from where they stood. We could not tell for certain what his

avenging missile had been, but the last we saw of the scene was the other carabinero laboriously plucking out of his colleague's nape what we hoped and believed were sea-urchin spines.

We sailed at seven o'clock next morning. As our steamer left the jetty I found myself wondering why we had done nothing about that farm ; asked no questions, made no effort at all ; why one never does do anything ; why one always goes back in the end to fogs and offices and wet Saturday nights in the King's Road. I dare say the others were wondering too, but none of us said it aloud.

Blond Dog, inscrutable as ever, waved to us from the quay ; the wall-eyed puppy gnawed incorrigibly at the net-floats ; and as C., T., and I leaned over the after rail we became aware that E. had already left our side. He was sitting in a deck-chair, reading, with his back turned resolutely to the island. He read, as often, half-aloud ; and his voice mingled with the steady throbbing of the engine :

“ Of man's first disobedience and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into this world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden. . . .”



## BRITAIN AND THE BALTIC

BY GEORGE SOLOVEYITCHIK

**B**RITAIN'S relations with the Baltic date back to time immemorial. It is only natural that in the course of centuries they should have undergone many transformations ; yet today the political, economic and cultural ties that bind these countries to England are stronger than ever. In a large measure Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania owe the restoration of their independence and their consolidation in the post-war world to England's favourable attitude.

Albert Mousset, that brilliant French journalist and witty commentator on international affairs, once remarked that the first expression of a young state's sovereignty is ingratitude, its first limitation the need of loans. In the case of the Baltic countries, however, it must be admitted that they have not been ungrateful, and they did not borrow much. Indeed, from the very outset of their new life as independent states they have used every endeavour to build up and consolidate their relations with Great Britain, and it is by no means a coincidence that in Latvia, for instance, the first compulsory foreign language introduced in the schools was English.

When during a recent visit to Riga I expressed my surprise and gratification at the large number of people, especially among the younger generation, who spoke excellent English, it transpired that the Latvians by their own efforts had created a special Institute where English was taught and where in the evenings civil servants, merchants, even workmen, could, after a hard day's work, improve their linguistic knowledge. There was much the same sort of thing in Tallinn (the former Reval), where the Estonians are not only using every endeavour to learn English, but even organize excellent amateur performances of Shakespeare as well as more modern authors. A special club and a society for Anglo-Estonian *rapprochement* were created by local en-

thusiasts, and it took the British authorities a long time before they condescended to express any appreciation or to offer any guidance and support. The striking thing in Kaunas (Kovno) was that most of the Lithuanians spoke English with a strong American accent. This is due to the fact that in Russian days most of the emigrants from Lithuania went to the United States, and the colony there for many generations has been so great that quite a large proportion of Lithuania's present ruling class were either born or trained in America, and returned to their mother country after it regained its independence.

This American influence manifests itself in many peculiar ways in Kaunas, the city offering a most extraordinary mixture of modern progress and pre-war backwardness. Kaunas, which was in Russian days a fortress town and the residence of the district's governor, is said to have been reduced to ashes thirteen times since its foundation in the eleventh century. Yet, many old churches—among them that of St. Vitautas, a red brick Lithuanian-Gothic building, dating back to the fifteenth century—and the magnificent Town Hall, have escaped destruction and are splendid monuments of the country's glorious past. The very modern war museum offers you the whole of Lithuanian history *en raccourci*; there is also a University founded in 1922, a High School for Agriculture, and many other academic institutions of different varieties. The National Theatre (opera, ballet, drama) is first-class. I saw a performance of *La Bohème* there which would have done honour to many a capital much larger than Kaunas with its 100,000 inhabitants. But, side by side with these achievements of modern civilization, there remain the most unbelievably squalid wooden huts, especially in the suburbs. There is much poverty and much hardship despite—or because of—the country's great and costly effort to establish herself in the post-war world. The astonishing thing, however, in all these Baltic countries—and especially in their capitals—is not what they have as yet failed to do, but what they have been able to achieve. Considering their limited resources, the size of their population (all three together have fewer inhabitants than Greater London alone), the havoc and devastation caused by the War, and then by their wars of independence, it is nothing short of remarkable how these people have established themselves

in the face of tremendous handicaps, political, racial, economic, and financial.

Riga, with its 400,000 inhabitants, is the largest of the Baltic capitals—quite a metropolis compared to the other two. Thanks to a favourable geographical position, this old Hanseatic town has for centuries been a great commercial and maritime centre, with ships sailing to the most distant parts of the globe. Today it is the seat of a somewhat excessively dictatorial government, but no doubt modifications and a certain relaxation of the pressure from above may be expected before long. In the person of Mr. W. Munters, Latvia is fortunate in possessing one of Europe's youngest and ablest Foreign Ministers—a man of vision, knowledge and character. The government of which he is a member has done much to improve the beauty of the city, and has put up many imposing buildings. The House of the Black Heads, the Town Hall, the Castle, and innumerable old churches testify to Riga's fascinating past. Among the things the Latvians are most proud of is the palatial new hotel which the Government has just put up at Kemerī, a world-famous spa (sulphur springs and mud baths) some twenty-five miles from Riga. It is a lovely place and is surrounded by forests. The sea, with its huge beach, known as the "Amber Shore" or "Baltic Riviera," is close by, and the innumerable resorts situated all along that endless stretch of wide sands seem to attract an ever-growing number of foreign tourists. So does Estonia, the smallest and perhaps the most attractive of the Baltic countries. Tallinn, its capital city, is one of the most picturesque places I have ever visited. Like Riga, it is an old Hanseatic city with very ancient British connexions. You still feel the spirit of the Hansa in that delightful town—you can see it in its magnificent old buildings, and even the national flag to this day bears the old Hanseatic blue stripe.

It is amazing to what extent these little countries are interested in the arts and how proficient they are in them. In all three capitals I saw and heard performances that are up to the best international standards. But then they have music in their blood. Not only do Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania each possess a folklore that is particularly rich in tales, legends, proverbs and national sagas, but a great deal of it is expressed in the form



of ballads, tunes and dances. In Latvia alone more than 200,000 such tunes have been collected, and the popular ballads or "Dainas" of Lithuania also amount to a huge figure. The Estonian national epic, the "Kalewipoeg" (not unlike the Finnish "Kalevala"), holds a special place of honour among the many songs and poems of that country. Regular folk-singing conventions, attended by many thousands of participants, are held in these countries, and in the days when the Tsarist government saw fit to prohibit all other cultural manifestations (such as the publication of books and papers in these languages), the singing conventions were the only means by which the Baltic races could keep up and express their specific national cultures. Folk-dancing in picturesque national dress is yet another tradition that lives to the present day, and arts and crafts are highly developed.

All this is now being studied, catalogued, photographed and written down with great care and genuine enthusiasm. Not only the Estonians, Lithuanians and Latvians themselves, but the Poles, too, are devoting much time and money to it. The Poles, for instance, have created a Baltic Institute, with its seat in Gdynia, which has already published a series of most interesting studies on local history, art, literature and finance, and which is issuing an excellent English quarterly called *Baltic Countries*. Subjects are certainly not lacking in that part of the world, with its rich past and its key position in the present international imbroglio.

Key position? it may be asked. A mere glance at the map will reveal the importance of these countries which separate Hitler's Germany from Stalin's Russia—a *cordon sanitaire* of a very different kind today from that contemplated in the far-away epoch of Versailles when that phrase was current.

If Herr Hitler's outbursts against Russia mean anything and if an attempt is ever made to realize them, then the Baltic countries and Poland will have to be conquered first. In a previous article in the *FORTNIGHTLY* I tried to draw a picture of Poland's present position and her reactions to this ever-latent threat. As far as the Baltic countries are concerned, the danger of a possible German invasion in the future is further enhanced by certain more immediate developments. When I paid a recent visit to

Memel, or Klaipeda as it is now called, I had the opportunity of finding out something about the sensational trial that is to take place there before long. It will reveal a huge German espionage organization in Lithuania. Its headquarters were at the Memel Post Office, while its operations were directed and financed by the German Consulate. The latter employed an enormous staff there, whose functions were certainly most peculiar, and some of whose principal officials appear to have been as clumsy as Herr von Papen in America during the war. The Germans seem to think that they are entitled to as much plotting against law and order in Lithuania as they like, and that any attempt of these people to defend themselves against Nazi blackmail and terrorism is highly reprehensible. When on a previous occasion the Lithuanians, in perfectly legitimate self-defence, tried and sentenced a gang of Nazi terrorists in Memel, the Germans replied by an unprecedented act. They unilaterally cancelled the trade agreement and closed the frontier, thus causing Lithuania serious economic difficulties, since the greater part of her foreign trade was at the time dependent on Germany. As a curious consequence of this, the Lithuanians were left with an enormous stock of geese destined for the German market. These were gradually disposed of at the cost of the civil service, every member of which was compelled to eat a certain number of geese every month in a fixed proportion to his salary or income.

England soon took Germany's position in Lithuania's foreign trade, to the considerable benefit of both countries, and the volume of this trade is still growing. But, generally speaking, in the Baltic just as in Scandinavia, British exporters spend more time and energy in competing with each other than in studying local requirements and new openings. The change in Britain's favour is thus due more to the trade agreements and to the efforts of the Baltic States themselves than to the spirit and enterprise of our own merchants. But this is an old story, and one gets tired of repeating it.

What is going to happen when the impending trial of the Memel Nazis takes place no one can say, but it is obvious that German tactics will be very largely determined by Herr Hitler's sense of how far he can go with his present storm tactics in

Europe. Memel, of course, is not a "Free City" like Danzig. From the outset it was incorporated as an integral part of Lithuania, which has spent a small fortune on developing the city and the port. But there are certain points of similarity with Danzig, not the least of them being that the greater part of the population is German. Next to Danzig, Memel is the most explosive danger spot on the Baltic.

The Lithuanians thus still have every cause to consider themselves as threatened by Hitler's Germany. Now their relations with their other neighbour—Poland—are hostile, too. Since the Poles seized Vilna some fifteen years ago the frontier between the two countries has been closed, there are no diplomatic, consular, or even postal relations; you cannot send a direct letter from Kaunas to Warsaw or vice versa, and still less travel from Poland to Lithuania, the railway track near the border having been removed. Notwithstanding this abnormal situation, as long as Marshal Pilsudski lived there could be no doubt that he would have protected Lithuania against any German or other aggression. This not only because he happened to be more of a Lithuanian than a Pole himself, but also because he very wisely realized that any attack on Lithuania was a direct threat to Poland. Pilsudski was the only man who could have brought a certain appeasement into the relations of these two countries in time of peace and co-operation in case of war. The present rulers of Poland do not appear to consider the safeguarding of Lithuania's independence as of paramount importance to themselves.

It is on account of these unsatisfactory relations between Lithuania and her two formidable neighbours, Poland and Germany, that the so-called Baltic Entente is no "Entente" at all. There is a military alliance between Latvia and Estonia. Both of them also work in close co-operation with the Lithuanians and have repeatedly used their best endeavours to prepare the ground for Polish-Lithuanian reconciliation. But so far they have been unsuccessful, and unless that can be achieved, they do not want to run the risk of being involved, through an alliance of any sort, in a conflict between Kaunas and Warsaw, or Berlin, or both. But while Estonia and Latvia do not wish to commit themselves to the unqualified support of Lithuania in case of



an aggression (it is perfectly clear, however, that if Lithuania were attacked they would soon be involved, too), there exists, in fact, the closest of political and economic co-operation between the three small Baltic republics. Economically they are to a large extent competitors and they try not to cut out each other in foreign markets, of which Britain is the most important. They all export flax, and hemp, timber and wooden goods, but principally agricultural products.

Germany, not Russia, has been their enemy in the past. The Baltic States offer a unique case of the national and social problems being practically identical. For centuries these nations of peasants—yet with a fine and original culture of their own—have been under foreign domination, and the oppressor even in Russian times was the German landlord. While the policy of the Tsarist Governments may at different periods have been stupid and even wicked, there was no trouble with the Russians as such. But the Baltic barons—of German origin—on the land, or the German merchants in the towns, who jointly represented the ruling caste in that part of the world for many generations, treated these people like cattle and incurred their well-deserved hatred and contempt. Moreover, what the German armies of occupation did in the Baltic provinces in the latter part of the war was too monstrous to be forgotten. Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians have indeed every reason to distrust Germany. The German minorities in all three countries today are being used as nuclei for spreading Nazism there, and can hardly be considered as loyal citizens. Germany continuously interferes in the internal affairs of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania ; it fosters sedition and discontent ; it finances and directs espionage organizations like the one in Memel ; and then it professes to be outraged if steps are taken to curtail its activities.

That none of the Baltic republics wishes a conflict with Germany is obvious. Neutrality is the main objective of their foreign policy. But, if attacked, they will fight gamely, and Memel might easily become the starting point of an aggression. The Soviets are not threatening them : the Germans are. It is only logical that the Baltic states should have drawn the obvious conclusion of such a state of affairs and sought a further

*rapprochement* with Russia. In the new alignment of forces this certainly means the lesser evil as far as they are concerned.

What they really want, however, is a strong lead and some encouragement from Great Britain. It would pay this country to give it to them. The Baltic is important to Britain as an economic entity; the trade turnover is extremely active and is growing every year. Both as sources of supply and as customers these states—especially when taken together—are interesting. But there are also other considerations. Through the naval treaty with Germany we virtually presented Herr Hitler with the hegemony of the Baltic. Moreover, through the Kiel Canal he can move his fleet between the North Sea and the Baltic backwards and forwards at his will, using the Baltic as the safest of all naval bases.

Unless steps are taken to prevent such a development, the Baltic may one day become a German lake. That the Powers concerned should feel greatly alarmed about such a possibility goes without saying. It is highly symptomatic, therefore, that Sweden, Finland and Denmark should be considering this problem both jointly and separately along with the three Baltic republics, and that they should all be wondering what England is going to do about it. Can England afford to stand aside and leave these countries to their own devices? That is the crux of the problem. The naval negotiations which have taken place in London between the British authorities and some of the Baltic and Scandinavian Powers seem to suggest that the government is at last beginning to wake up to the importance of North-Eastern Europe. The situation, however, remains as yet somewhat ambiguous. It is not money these countries want—some of them are actually booming and others are doing quite well. What is necessary is that, apart from empty after-dinner speeches, they should be made to feel that Britain is both friendly and interested. They should be made to feel that small though they are, England values in them not only good commercial friends of several centuries' standing, but associates or allies in the common defence of peace.

## THE CITY OF HARLEM

BY GEOFFREY GORER

THE city of New York covers more than the island of Manhattan; but even that lump of granite is a conglomeration of towns, rather than a single homogeneous city. Round the narrow core of white English-speaking Americans there is a city of Germans, another of Italians, a third of Poles, and a fourth of Cubans; there are villages of Chinese and Yugoslavs; there are smaller settlements where only Yiddish and French are spoken; but the biggest of these cities within a city is Harlem, the home of the New York Negro. Harlem has a bigger population than most English county towns—it is, I believe, roughly half a million—and is as self-contained as most towns of similar size. The inhabitants could with some justice be called the original Americans, for at any rate one line of their ancestry has been in the United States longer than any group of white Americans of similar size. Most of the Negroes came to the United States in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most of the whites in the middle of the nineteenth, and even later; there is not, however, a Negro Social Register based on ancestry, and no slave-ship has so far been set up in rivalry to the *Mayflower*.

Architecturally, Harlem appears far more European than the other parts of New York. The change in atmosphere from southern New York is striking. There is less traffic, less noise, less show of hurry; life is not envisaged as a continual rush to catch a train which is just leaving; people have time to saunter along the streets. An Englishman can feel oddly at home there; if he does not notice the people on the side-walks he might imagine himself in Pimlico or Maida Vale. The slums which abut on the main thoroughfares have nothing to teach England in the way of disgraceful living conditions. In that respect Harlem can rival Bermondsey or Glasgow.

The contact of Harlem with the rest of New York is fairly slight. The greater number of its inhabitants pass their lives without reference to the whites; in many instances, if they



keep clear of the law, without any direct contact at all. Harlem is as self-contained as most cities ; it has its own lawyers and its own doctors, its own aristocrats and its own millionaires, its own school-teachers and its own paupers. Not only do the Negroes have practically no contact with white people ; they withdraw from white society as completely as white society withdraws from them. The Negroes are, not unnaturally, excessively race-conscious ; and this race-consciousness takes the form of a snobbish exclusiveness, which is at least as strong as that of the whites. Harlem society is the hardest in the whole of the United States for a foreigner to enter ; it is far easier for a visitor to get into Park Avenue than into Striver's Row. I was taken up to a small extent by Negro Society because of the interest my book *Africa Dances* had aroused among the Negro intellectuals ; but more than once when I was taken to visit in a strange house my entry was marked by a shocked silence, with the patent if unformulated comment : " What ! is our house being contaminated by the presence of an uncoloured man ! " It was a strange, and extremely uncomfortable sensation, to be thus regarded as something from outside the pale ; sometimes I was able to wear down the first impression, and be treated as an ordinary human being ; but on more than one occasion I am sure that my unfortunate introducer was bitterly reproached the next day. Of course there are a certain number of Negroes who enjoy the company of whites, and a certain number of whites who like Negroes (these latter are ignominiously termed by both races " jig-chasers " ) ; but they are exceptions for both communities.

The average attitude of the white towards the Negro is strangely ambivalent ; the Negro is, of course, by the colour of his skin, of an inferior nature to any white ; but at the same time the Negroes represent all that is pleasant and forbidden in life—leisure, drink, music, dancing, drugs and debauchery. This attitude is so firmly implanted in the mind of many whites, that Harlem has come to be synonymous with all these pleasant sins ; and for the sake of such people there is a considerable amount of rather hectic night-life. This night-life is completely paradoxical ; whites have come to Harlem to have fun with the Negroes, and in the places they go to you will never see a Negro

except as entertainer or waiter. Very rarely, if a "joint" is not doing too well, a few Negroes will be hired as make-believe guests; you will practically never find a Negro paying in the places whites frequent.

The places the Negroes go to for their own pleasure would disappoint the seekers after illicit thrills; they are cheap and extremely sedate, with, on the whole, very little drinking or love-making. The best bands are there, and the worst and most sentimental singers. The floor-space is huge, for the Negroes dance for the pleasure of dancing, and not to rub up against one another; many of them dance superlatively well—in the "Savoy," the best known and most popular Negro dance-hall you can see couple after couple dancing as well as any stage performers—but they only dance in one style: very acrobatic steps with extremely quick tempo; slow measures, the blues, the tango, or the rumba, are far better danced by Cubans and Argentines. The typical Negro dance is, in 1936, the Lindy Hop, a dance too quick for most Europeans, in which the partners barely touch one another, and are often separated by half the width of the floor; a dance which seemed to me to call for an equal amount of acrobatic skill and of telepathy, for partners separated by several yards will often execute simultaneously newly improvised steps.

Harlem is the least democratic portion of the Northern United States; the Negroes compensate for the racial inferiority which is imposed upon them by the whites, by subdividing themselves into a number of mutually exclusive groups. There are practically no Negroes who cannot find a portion of their race about whom they can feel themselves superior. These groups are made up in a number of ways: the rich can despise the poor, the educated the uneducated, the religious the irreligious, or those belonging to religious groups other than their own; those who strive for racial unity can despise those Northern Negroes who despise and look down on the Southerners; the gangster and the law-abiding citizen can despise one another; strangest of all, light-skinned Negroes (that is, Negroes with a certain amount of white blood) despise those with darker skins, although they do not—indeed cannot—consider that their admixture of foreign blood makes them any less Negro.

The Negroes consider a light skin more beautiful, but it also has a definite prestige value, at any rate up to a certain point. There are some so-called Negroes with straight fair hair, white skin and blue eyes, who may have one-sixteenth or even less Negro blood in their veins. When there are no Negro physical stigmata (for the superstitions about pigment on the finger-nails and similar signs which are meant to show hidden Negro blood are completely without foundation) the prestige and beauty value of a pale skin drops somewhat. This system of mutual superiority is undoubtedly a necessary psychological support for the Negroes' unenviable position in a predominantly white civilization; it is also very useful for the whites, for it splits the Negro's feeling of solidarity, and prevents them uniting to resist the oppression and unjust treatment of which they are continual victims.

The first sign in a Negro that he or she wishes to be considered better than his fellows is his clothes. The ordinary Negro wears clothes of bright colours and gaudy patterns which would look outrageous on a white, but which go admirably with their whole appearance; but the Negro with social pretensions looks on such clothes as a sign of lack of culture, and instead of the parrot reds and greens and electric blues, he will dress in greys and browns. He will desert the dance-halls and cafés, which in Harlem play nearly as important a role as they do in Paris. Partly as a defence reaction, and partly for the hell of it, the ordinary Negro in his everyday life revolts against and parodies the standards of his white neighbours—punctuality, carefulness with money, respect for the conventions, legalized sex; the Negro who wishes to rise socially on the other hand respects these white conventions even more strongly than the whites themselves. Except for punctuality, not even the strongest social ambitions can give a Negro, any more than they can give a Russian, a sense of time. Then when a Negro is soberly dressed, circumspect in his behaviour, respectable and sedate in his home life, with an increasing banking account, and with conversational fluency on cultured subjects—literature, the arts, politics—he is ready for society—perhaps he will even have his name down for an apartment in Striver's Row or Sugar Hill.

The difference between Striver's Row and Sugar Hill (these are the derisive names given to the streets by those who do not



inhabit them) is the difference between Mayfair and Chelsea. In Striver's Row it is really only wealth that counts : wealth that manifests itself in huge chandeliers, in life-size marble statues, in gold-stamped velvet curtains and potted palms, in luxury as it was understood in Edwardian days. Some of the over-crowded interiors seem with their expensive furniture like visions of a lost world. Here is society in the dearest sense of the word : formal entertainments, liveried servants, heart-burnings over invitations which have, or have not, been sent. Sugar Hill, on the other hand, has less luxury and more taste ; the furnishing is simpler and more modern ; many of the apartments have pleasant contemporary paintings, or African Negro carvings ; Sugar Hill is the aristocracy of intelligence. And the Negro intellectuals have chosen well, for the situation of Sugar Hill is almost the pleasantest in New York : the road is quiet and only built up on one side ; from the windows you look over the polo ground to the Hudson, and, far away, the Bronx. It is one of the few situations in New York where you have a sense of space.

And when a Negro has made the grade, has got into one of the two societies, what then ? Then he talks and he talks and he talks. For the Negro, as for the Russian (and temperamentally the two races have much in common) conversation is a pleasure and an art—almost *the* pleasure and *the* art, the justification and the reward of life. With us Anglo-Saxons conversation has sunk to so low and utilitarian a level that we cannot see that it can also be an aim in itself ; for us “ mere talk ” is a condemnation, not a commendation. But the Negro enjoys talking and listening to good talk ; and since they take education and what is considered to be culture seriously, their talk is usually both entertaining and well-informed. They naturally cover an enormous variety of topics, but there is one topic which overtops and permeates all the rest—the topic of Race.

They are race-conscious, and proud of their race ; they flaunt their colour as some Jews will flaunt their religion. But they can never leave the subject alone. If, when I was in their society, they were able after a time to forget my obnoxious colour, to forget that I was an alien in their midst, inevitably the conversation would turn to the question of race. Is it possible

for Negroes and whites to undersand one another? Is it possible for them ever to trust one another? Do they ever tell one another the truth? It seems to me that they practically never do. Nearly all American Negroes are on the defensive against whites and will tell them as little as possible, and what they do tell them will almost certainly be false. Time and again I have heard Negroes recount how they have fobbed off whites with false information, sometimes pretentiously exaggerating the real facts, sometimes over-humbly minimising them. This lying is a form of self-defence, of protection from mockery, often quite unnecessary with the individual, though justified with the race; I have heard Negroes whom I thought were my friends boast that they have never really given their confidence to a white man. I think they were telling the truth.

Alongside the discussion of the relationship of white and coloured goes the discussion of the peculiar attributes: the past and future of the Negroes as a race. What is the present and potential contribution of the Negroes to world culture? Is there the possibility of an exclusively Negro art? Should Negroes try to excel in the spheres of white art and scholarship, or try to develop art forms of their own? When I was in New York this subject was often started from a reference to the recitals of Miss Mary Anderson. Miss Anderson is one of the world's greatest singers, and has given recitals of Bach in nearly every capital in the world. In every group I was in some people maintained that she should not sing Bach, which was white music, but only songs by Negro composers. Although this problem seemed to me childish, it was debated, and hotly debated, over and over again. Most Negroes, I think, believed in the possibility of Negro art.

To my mind a modern Negro art is completely impossible, for the simple reason that there is no modern Negro culture. The American Negro has a slightly different surface to the American white, but he has the same language, the same education, the same laws and the same religion. The American Negroes are not an entity; they are a minority in a nation made up of minorities. What are considered to be specifically Negro characteristics — childishness, ready laughter, love of music, loose sexual morals—are really proletarian or vestigial slave

characteristics, the consolations for an unbearable social situation ; as soon as the Negro gets money and education he acquires the same attitudes and habits as his white compatriot. Even physically the Negroes are not a race ; their ancestry is even more mixed than that of white Americans, an amalgam of every race in Africa and most races in Europe. There are practically no pure-blooded Negroes in the United States, and few without a white ancestor in the first three generations. It is as futile to expect American Negroes to continue the tradition of African Negro sculpture as to expect French Canadians to write tragedies in the style of Racine, or Australians to produce a music like Purcell's. The American Negro has indeed as little connection with the Congo as the French Canadian with the Versailles of Louis XIV.

In only one section of American Negro life is there any trace of Africa, and that is in their religion, particularly the rather odd heretical Christian sects which attract the poorest Negroes. I was present at the meeting of a strange group called the Holy Saints which was held at the back of a beauty parlour ; the congregation was about twenty, of which two thirds were women. Women were the important members of the group, for while the men sang the women danced with a peculiar wriggling motion of the spine, shuffling their feet to a syncopated rhythm : they danced till they fell into a kind of trance, during which their eyes turned up till only the whites showed, and they spoke some impassioned gibberish, claiming that they were filled with the Holy Ghost and were speaking with tongues. As I watched I found it hard to remember that I was in the United States, for I had seen almost an identical dance, with similar effects, in Senegal : there it was the dance of the M'Deup, the witch-finding dance of possessed women. I do not know, though, whether this should be put down to the survival of the African tradition, or whether getting into similar psychological states and performing the same violent and unusual movements will produce universally the same effects.

From what I could see of the " conjur men " and " wise women " a certain amount of West African techniques, particularly in the articles of sacrifice, have been preserved, probably through later contact with Jamaica where the African, particularly



Ashanti, tradition has been preserved with far less alteration. And with these African remnants the latter-day Negro magicians employ all the devices of European superstition, Christian and pagan, spiritualist and occultist. With small local variations, the Negro trades on the fear and credulities of his fellows in the same way as the white charlatan.

Religion is probably the greatest integrating force among the Harlem Negroes, and greater unity can be got through a religious movement than in any other way. When I was in New York the Negro with the greatest actual influence (as opposed to Joe Louis, the boxer, who was a universal hero with his photo in every home) was Father Divine. Father Divine was the head of a very large and powerful sect, whose followers claimed that he was God Incarnate. Father Divine would hedge on the subject when questioned directly, saying that that was what his followers said, and that as we were all the children of God, we were all in our way God Incarnate. Father Divine had the brilliant idea of feeding his congregation with chicken and pie; there was a large refectory next door to his meeting hall, where all who called might be fed. He inspired fanatical belief, and when he appeared among his own congregation women went into fits, screamed and fainted in the aisles, and people pushed to try to touch the hem of his garment. Father Divine could exact implicit obedience from his large congregation (did he not feed them when they were hungry, prevent them from being turned out of their apartments when they were behindhand with the rent, give them groceries on credit from his own store?), and he was using this solid mass of voters politically, threatening over the radio that they would all vote the way he told them, and that he alone could forecast how a quarter of a million people would vote.

It is difficult to foresee the future of the American Negro. Logically he should have none, except as an American; the colour bar is a stupid anachronism, which prevents, not inter-breeding, but an equal wage for equal work. But people are not logical, and until the American people regard a man's qualities and actions, rather than his parents and the colour of his skin, Harlem is likely to continue as a sort of modern ghetto, with all the contradictions, comic and tragic, that such an institution inevitably produces today.

## BOOKSHOP MEMORIES

BY GEORGE ORWELL

WHEN I worked in a second-hand bookshop—so easily pictured, if you don't work in one, as a kind of paradise where charming old gentlemen browse eternally among calf-bound folios—the thing that chiefly struck me was the rarity of really bookish people. Our shop had an exceptionally interesting stock, yet I doubt whether ten per cent. of our customers knew a good book from a bad one. First edition snobs were much commoner than lovers of literature, but oriental students haggling over cheap textbooks were commoner still, and vague-minded women looking for birthday presents for their nephews were commonest of all.

Many of the people who came to us were of the kind who would be a nuisance anywhere but have special opportunities in a bookshop. For example, the dear old lady who “wants a book for an invalid” (a very common demand, that), and the other dear old lady who read such a nice book in 1897 and wonders whether you can find her a copy. Unfortunately she doesn't remember the title or the author's name or what the book was about, but she does remember that it had a red cover. But apart from these there are two well-known types of pest by whom every second-hand bookshop is haunted. One is the decayed person smelling of old breadcrusts who comes every day, sometimes several times a day, and tries to sell you worthless books. The other is the person who orders large quantities of books for which he has not the smallest intention of paying. In our shop we sold nothing on credit, but we would put books aside, or order them if necessary, for people who arranged to fetch them away later. Scarcely half the people who ordered books from us ever came back. It used to puzzle me at first. What made them do it? They would come in and demand some rare and expensive book, would make us promise over and over again to keep it for

them, and then would vanish never to return. But many of them, of course, were unmistakeable paranoiacs. They used to talk in a grandiose manner about themselves and tell the most ingenious stories to explain how they had happened to come out of doors without any money—stories which, in many cases, I am sure they themselves believed. In a town like London there are always plenty of not quite certifiable lunatics walking the streets, and they tend to gravitate towards bookshops, because a bookshop is one of the few places where you can hang about for a long time without spending any money. In the end one gets to know these people almost at a glance. For all their big talk there is something moth-eaten and aimless about them. Very often, when we were dealing with an obvious paranoiac, we would put aside the books he asked for and then put them back on the shelves the moment he had gone. None of them, I noticed, ever attempted to take books away without paying for them; merely to order them was enough—it gave them, I suppose, the illusion they they were spending real money.

Like most second-hand bookshops we had various sidelines. We sold second-hand typewriters, for instance, and also stamps—used stamps, I mean. Stamp-collectors are a strange silent fish-like breed, of all ages, but only of the male sex; women, apparently, fail to see the peculiar charm of gumming bits of coloured paper into albums. We also sold sixpenny horoscopes compiled by somebody who claimed to have foretold the Japanese earthquake. They were in sealed envelopes and I never opened one of them myself, but the people who bought them often came back and told us how “true” their horoscopes had been. (Doubtless any horoscope seems “true” if it tells you that you are highly attractive to the opposite sex and your worst fault is generosity.) We did a good deal of business in children’s books, chiefly “remainders.” Modern books for children are rather horrible things, especially when you see them in the mass. Personally I would sooner give a child a copy of Petronius Arbiter than *Peter Pan*, but even Barrie seems manly and wholesome compared with some of his later imitators. At Christmas time we spent a feverish ten days struggling with Christmas cards and calendars, which are tiresome things to sell but good business while the season lasts. It used to interest me



to see the brutal cynicism with which Christian sentiment is exploited. The touts from the Christmas card firms used to come round with their catalogues as early as June. A phrase from one of their invoices sticks in my memory. It was : " 2 doz. Infant Jesus with rabbits."

But our principal sideline was a lending library—the usual " twopenny no-deposit " library of five or six hundred volumes, all fiction. How the book thieves must love those libraries ! It is the easiest crime in the world to borrow a book at one shop for twopence, remove the label and sell it at another shop for a shilling. Nevertheless booksellers generally find that it pays them better to have a certain number of books stolen (we used to lose about a dozen a month) than to frighten customers away by demanding a deposit.

Our shop stood exactly on the frontier between Hampstead and Camden Town, and we were frequented by all types from baronets to bus-conductors. Probably our library subscribers were a fair cross-section of London's reading public. It is therefore worth noting that of all the authors in our library the one who " went out " the best was—Priestley ? Hemingway ? Walpole ? Wodehouse ? No, Ethel M. Dell, with Warwick Deeping a good second and Jeffery Farnol, I should say, third. Dell's novels, of course, are read solely by women, but by women of all kinds and ages and not, as one might expect, merely by wistful spinsters and the fat wives of tobacconists. It is not true that men don't read novels, but it is true that there are whole branches of fiction that they avoid. Roughly speaking, what one might call the *average* novel—the ordinary, good-bad, Galsworthy - and - water stuff which is the norm of the English novel—seems to exist only for women. Men read either the novels it is possible to respect, or detective stories. But their consumption of detective stories is terrific. One of our subscribers to my knowledge read four or five detective stories every week for over a year, besides others which he got from another library. What chiefly surprised me was that he never read the same book twice. Apparently the whole of that frightful torrent of trash (the pages he read every year would, I calculated, cover nearly three-quarters of an acre) was stored for ever in his memory. He took no notice of titles or authors' names, but he

could tell by merely glancing into a book whether he had "had it already."

In a lending library you see people's real tastes, not their pretended ones, and one thing that strikes you is how completely the "classical" English novelists have dropped out of favour. It is simply useless to put Dickens, Thackeray, Jane Austen, Trollope, etc., into the ordinary lending library; nobody takes them out. At the mere sight of a nineteenth-century novel people say "Oh, but that's *old*!" and shy away immediately. Yet it is always fairly easy to *sell* Dickens, just as it is always easy to sell Shakespeare. Dickens is one of those authors whom people are "always meaning to" read, and, like the Bible, he is widely known at second hand. People know by hearsay that Bill Sykes was a burglar and that Mr. Micawber had a bald head, just as they know by hearsay that Moses was found in a basket of bulrushes and saw the "back parts" of the Lord. Another thing that is very noticeable is the growing unpopularity of American books. And another—the publishers get into a stew about this every two or three years—is the unpopularity of short stories. The kind of person who asks the librarian to choose a book for him nearly always starts by saying "I don't want short stories," or "I do not desire little stories," as a German customer of ours used to put it. If you ask them why, they sometimes explain that it is too much fag to get used to a new set of characters with every story; they like to "get into" a novel which demands no further thought after the first chapter. I believe, though, that the writers are more to blame here than the readers. Most modern short stories, English and American, are utterly lifeless and worthless, far more so than most novels. The short stories which *are* stories are popular enough, *vide* D. H. Lawrence, whose short stories are as popular as his novels.

Would I like to be a bookseller *de métier*? On the whole—in spite of my employer's kindness to me, and some happy days I spent in the shop—no.

Given a good pitch and the right amount of capital, any educated person ought to be able to make a small secure living out of a bookshop. Unless one goes in for "rare" books it is not a difficult trade to learn, and you start at a great advantage if you know anything about the insides of books. (Most book-

sellers don't. You can get their measure by having a look at the trade papers where they advertise their wants. If you don't see an ad. for Boswell's *Decline and Fall* you are pretty sure to see one for *The Mill on the Floss* by T. S. Eliot.) Also it is a humane trade which is not capable of being vulgarised beyond a certain point. The combines can never squeeze the small independent bookseller out of existence as they have squeezed the grocer and the milkman. But the hours of work are very long—I was only a part-time employee, but my employer put in a 70-hour week, apart from constant expeditions out of hours to buy books—and it is an unhealthy life. As a rule a bookshop is horribly cold in winter, because if it is too warm the windows get misted over, and a bookseller lives on his windows. And books give off more and nastier dust than any other class of objects yet invented, and the top of a book is the place where every bluebottle prefers to die.

But the real reason why I should not like to be in the book trade for life is that while I was in it I lost my love of books. A bookseller has to tell lies about books, and that gives him a distaste for them ; still worse is the fact that he is constantly dusting them and hauling them to and fro. There was a time when I really did love books—loved the sight and smell and feel of them, I mean, at least if they were fifty or more years old. Nothing pleased me quite so much as to buy a job lot of them for a shilling at a country auction. There is a peculiar flavour about the battered unexpected books you pick up in that kind of collection : minor eighteenth-century poets, out of date gazeteers, odd volumes of forgotten novels, bound numbers of ladies' magazines of the 'sixties. For casual reading—in your bath, for instance, or late at night when you are too tired to go to bed, or in the odd quarter of an hour before lunch—there is nothing to touch a back number of the *Girl's Own Paper*. But as soon as I went to work in the bookshop I stopped buying books. Seen in the mass, five or ten thousand at a time, books were boring and even slightly sickening. Nowadays I do buy one occasionally, but only if it is a book that I want to read and can't borrow, and I never buy junk. The sweet smell of decaying paper appeals to me no longer. It is too closely associated in my mind with paranoiac customers and dead bluebottles.



## THE ARTIST AND HIS PUBLIC

BY ROMILLY JOHN

**I**T has been said that the artist cares nothing about money. I will not dispute this statement, as it seems to me unworthy of serious consideration. But what of that other notion, that he works, or should work, only to please himself? It, at least, has a certain plausibility; but is it right?

It is always of great help, in æsthetic discussions, to have in mind the practice and opinions of the artists themselves. One may not, perhaps, get all that intractable host to toe the line of a particular theory, nor shall I attempt it here; but take, for instance, Hans Andersen. This great Danish artist seems to have lived to be an illustration of my theme. Only comparatively late in life was he at last convinced, by public opinion, that his gift was for writing fairy tales. He had always been tormented by the desire to please, embarrassingly eager for the praise of everyone; and had it not been for his submission to the public as the sole means of gratifying this taste for applause, he would almost certainly have gone on writing plays about mulattos and moorish girls, in the "grand style," or long philosophical epics of infinite tedium. The fact was, he fancied himself as a purveyor of such stuff, and it is to the firmness of the Danish public in refusing to be impressed by it, and clamouring for those tales which Andersen had begun by considering the merest trifles, that the world owes some of its most exquisite poetry.

Other examples are not wanting. Scott and Dickens were half created by their public: you may choose to despise them for it, but there it is. Many great comedians have notoriously burned to appear in tragedy, and only been kept to their own line by the firmness of audiences. Ingres, I believe, wanted to be a violinist. It is said in praise of Chaliapine that in youth he was always ready to take advice. Other artists, equally anxious to give pleasure, have not always taken criticism so well—

at the time ; but one may be sure that in the end it affected their works.

What is implied by the phrase : " An artist pleases himself " ? In the first place, one financially independent would hardly go to the trouble of exhibiting ; he would not wish to risk, as a human being, the disapprobation of his fellows, and as an artist he would be indifferent to their praise. The productions of art, then, would be of the same kind as the song of the skylark. But perhaps even the skylark is not so disinterested as he is made out. Spirit he may be, yet he is a bird as well, and not inconceivably his outpourings are, and are meant to be, attended to. Even the Flauberts of this life *publish* : they hope for praise, if only from the *élite*. Do they, after all, do it only as fallible human beings, those strange ascetics of the art world ? I think not. At any rate, even Flaubert, the lofty and indifferent, was very much put out when everyone preferred *Madame Bovary* to *L'Education Sentimentale*. (And who was right ?) The artist, I like to think, is a social being even in, indeed especially in his character as an artist. He may perhaps be sometimes a recluse ; the approach of footsteps along the road to his cottage may (and does in one case I know of) drive him into cover behind the gooseberry bushes. Yet his whole life is spent in communication with as large a number of people as possible—the more the merrier.

How, then, did the idea spring up that he is an unsocial or even anti-social phenomenon ? Was it Byron's doing ? Surely it is only quite lately that it has taken root. Art for the Artist's sake : that seems the motto nowadays ; or art—since the social side will obtrude—for the sake of those who produce similar art. Yet to Shelley, we know, poets were the unacknowledged legislators of the world ; that is a far cry from one writing only to please himself. There is something a little pompous in Shelley's definition, and I think Wordsworth got nearer the mark when he said the poet needed nothing but the ability to communicate immediate pleasure. There is no necessity to drag in legislation—though some artists may, of course, reach those heights. Others, like Jane Austen, are quite satisfied with the position of a mere judge. And still others seem only connected with the moral or social code in a Pickwickian sense.

The two key words of Wordsworth's dictum are "communicate" and "pleasure." One, of course, involves the other; before a pleasure can be communicated, it must be felt. Wordsworth did not envisage the "creation" of pleasure. When I sit down to write to my friend, it is because I have an impulse to communicate with him, and so far, indeed, I please myself. But his character and situation influence the style and substance of what I write to him; I would not write the same letter to everyone, unless indeed to communicate a change of address. The condition of my pleasure is a belief that he, too, will be pleased. And so with art: the poet is writing to his public, about his own emotions perhaps, but in such a way that others may feel them to be *their* emotions.

Then what becomes of the view that art expresses the artist's personality? Holders of this not infrequently agree with the American lady who, on hearing that I was a writer, exclaimed with the deepest sympathy: "Ah, yes, it is an agony—art is an agony!" Well, it certainly has its trials, for those who produce as well as the others, but it is really a matter of pleasure for all that. As for the artist's-personality theory, it is at most only a half or quarter truth. Not even the "subjective" artist, when at work, really worries about his personality; he probably knows a good deal less about it than his friends. His feelings and thoughts, yes, and unless they are not too dissimilar from other people's he is merely wasting his time. One might indeed say that a letter-writer is expressing the personality of his correspondent. What, after all, is an artist's personality? It is not just one thing, surely. Hans Andersen, for instance, had several facets to his character, or shall I say rather, several ways of writing, and might easily have had others; very sensibly he chose in the end to stick to that which was most appreciated. According to Keats, the more you were an artist the less you had a personality to express. You were like wet clay, a receiver of impressions, or like water, which assumes the shape of what contains it. To be an artist, in a word, is to have *no* character.

Even modern highbrows are seldom, if ever, content merely to please themselves. While it is true that they frequently abuse the public, they lean heavily on each other, and, moreover, can be relied on to show an almost childish pleasure in genuine



popularity—big sales. Every artist—money apart—either has or would like to have a large audience ; but the amount of money he makes is a sure, the surest measure of his appeal. His instinct to make money is, I maintain, profoundly right. On the other hand, I believe that the admiration of the “transfigured few” is a snare to him ; for they, far more than the abused “general public,” are sheep-like. Besides, when they have once taken up a writer they feel it necessary to maintain him through thick and thin—often how thin ! Their support lessens his need for a wider, more spontaneous verdict ; if he does not get that, it is always the public’s fault. In part it may be. But as long as he thinks so, we shall have no more Shakespeares.

There is no getting away from it : the pleasure an artist communicates, as expressed in his popularity, is his only assurance that he is an artist—that, flavoured as his works cannot help being with idiosyncrasy, he is not merely “expressing himself.” I do not say that such a flavouring is bad for the dish ; it may give it piquancy ; but to maintain that it is the dish seems just nonsense. To this day there are quarrels about what sort of a man Shakespeare was. Nobody knows.

“It doesn’t matter,” Roy Campbell said to me years ago, “whether you think your poems good or bad. The first thing to do is to publish them.” It was not the advice of an æsthete, but of one who knew from the inside—a poet.

## EBB AND FLOW

### *A Monthly Commentary*

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

**B**ELGIUM has brusquely altered the European chessboard, and this dramatic move has been at once construed as a declaration against Russian tendencies in France. Some have even seen in it a sign of sympathy for German ideals, which have their admirers in Belgium just as they have in England, and probably in about the same proportion. Those who believe that Belgians will surrender one tittle of their independence to Germany had better go back and read the Countess de Croÿe's war memoirs which reveal the soul of Belgium better than any speaker or official documents. None the less, Belgium desires to be equally independent of France, and inevitably she is not grateful to its Government which has made an economic revolution whose influences must spread across the frontier. Probably the Belgian Government thinks that France is under the influence of Russian ideas—which indeed have their effect in France, exactly as French ideas after the Revolution had their effect outside France; and Belgium is faced with the fact that the most aggressive military Power in Europe declares violent hostility to these ideas and to all exponents of them. Her military independence has since the war not been complete. She can afford to make it so, since if Germany attacked Belgian territory, England and France would both feel constrained for their own safety to intervene. This is the only contingency in which the full co-operation of France and England can be counted on as certain. Belgium would remain free to stand neutral in case of a direct attack by Germany on the French frontier, or in that of a threat to Switzerland, which neither the Swiss nor military opinion at large regard as impossible. Should the much more likely event of

an embroilment between Germany and some Power to the East present itself, in which France would either be pledged or decide to intervene, Belgium definitely does not wish to be involved. She will not fight in support of France's alliance with the Soviets, and makes that clear in advance. She is well within her rights.

But it seems to be considered in some quarters that Belgium should be taken as the voice of Europe declaring that the Franco-Soviet Pact must end. Are we getting back into the mentality of the Holy Alliance? Russia may be a danger to Europe, for ideas are dangerous and Russian ideas have taken strong hold in all free countries. That is no reason why the Russian state, which attempts to put them into practice, should be treated throughout Europe as a pariah, or why the desire to act in concert with it should be regarded as compounding a felony. Commerce in ideas cannot be prohibited. The only effective answer to them is a study of their working, and English trade unionists who have investigated the results of these ideas in Russia have done more to check the spread of Communism in England than all the Conservative propaganda. In France, Russian influence has been more of a danger than in England because labour there was less strongly organized against capital, and capital more distrustful of labour organizations. It is also true that the same influences that have bred bitterness between classes in France have led in Spain to civil war—evoking in France dangerously violent sympathies. But it does not follow that we are to accept German notions as to what the interest of Europe demands—still less, to demand that France shall accept them.

Spain inevitably remains the centre of the European whirlpool, and one must be grateful for anything that helps to comprehension of its struggle. In the *Observer* of October 11th, **The Spanish Tragedy** Señor Salvador de Madariaga, one of the finest living writers on political subjects, gave us light—not the hard light of detached intellect, but warm illumination from the heart of a Spaniard who loves his country. He asks us to remember that Spain's tragedy is neither Russian nor German nor Italian in its origin; it springs out of Spain's own difficult



and splendid nature which expresses itself equally by reckless self-immolation and by ruthless persecution. He does not ask us to disbelieve the worst that is reported of either side, but to recognize the utter heroism which both sides have shown. The cadets of the Alcazar have won, and nothing has ever more deserved the world's sympathy; but the miners of Oviedo, who with the odds running heavy against their cause, pushed on their attack with hand-placed dynamite against entrenched and desperate riflemen, showed an equal courage. Naturally then as the struggle seems nearing a decision, the European Powers find it harder every day to restrain sympathy from converting itself into action. There is no question but that material support from outside has come to both parties; the only doubt is as to the proportion. But of the Great Powers, three make no attempt to conceal their preference; only England, where neither Fascism nor Communism is a serious force, can be really neutral; the worst difficulty is for France, whose Socialist Government is not independent of Communist allies and must be gravely concerned lest a victory of the Right in Spain should strengthen the Right in France.

It is, however, possible that M. Blum's very acute mind has perceived that danger for his cause lies the other way.

**Dilemma of the Moderates** France is one of the countries where property and the amenities of life are most evenly distributed—just as Spain seems to have been one of the worst examples of dangerous inequality. For that reason, the Left in Spain knows no moderation. Señor de Madariaga tells us that probably half the working men are neither Socialists nor Marxists but “anarcho-syndicalists”—very difficult to distinguish in practice from anarchists pure and simple. French property owners great and small (and the small are counted by millions) would feel anything but safe under a Socialist administration if a government of the Left in Spain (not even professedly Socialist) had ended by putting anarchy in power. And indeed this seems to be at the moment a true description of the situation wherever the so-called “Government” rules. Recently in Dublin the

Press published a statement that Spain's representative at the Legation had been recalled. Next day we heard the facts, which are significant. That Minister was, by the consent of all who had known him, a singularly attractive member of the diplomatic profession ; by family and training he was connected with the Right, but had become Republican by conviction, and even after revolt broke out last June was defending and upholding the Government's cause. But as events progressed he grew uneasy and, going on leave to visit his wife and children who were in Biarritz, he met a flood of refugees from Spain. On top of what he learnt from them came the news that his sister's husband, a former Minister, had been murdered like so many others. He sent in his resignation, declaring that he could no longer recognize the existing regime as in any sense a government ; no direct reply reached him, but after an interval his dismissal was published.

If such a government emerged victorious over a revolt supported so widely and so gallantly as this one has been, it is hard to believe that the results would be hopeful for civilization. The spectacle of an army turning its arms against its own country is not agreeable, yet there may be worse. In extreme cases resistance to unbearable oppression is the only way ; submission makes the evil worse.

In her remarkable *Memoirs*, written a hundred years ago but published only a few years back, the Marquise de Gouvernet relates her experiences, first as lady of honour at the Court of Louis XVI, then in the Revolution and afterwards under the Empire. The book has a hundred interests, but what struck me in reading it was her fierce comment on the abject lack of resistance to mere blackguardedly terrorism. The extreme example was in Bordeaux, where an "army" was known to be marching on the rich and populous city, and the well-to-do proposed resistance or talked of it. But when the "army" appeared, seven hundred ill-armed and ill-clad, all resistance disappeared, and the worst brutalities were inflicted. General Franco and his followers did not lack reason for striking ; they struck in time, and they struck hard. It looks as if they had at least as good right as the Government to claim that they struck in the name of Spain.

Assuming that the insurgents prevail, I see no reason to expect trouble in France. The left wing there cannot well be angrier than they are now with M. Blum for his determination to keep France neutral. On the other side, his tolerance for the occupation of factories against their owners has shaken the confidence of many Republicans, not only in him but in republican government, and it would be idle to deny the existence of grave discontent. Yet at least one very typical industrialist of my acquaintance who condemned vehemently M. Blum's laxity towards the strikers will have been surprised and pleased by the sudden decision to alter the franc's value—for he as a business man thought this necessary, and yet had no hope of seeing it adopted. I think, indeed, that France at large will find satisfaction, first in the fact that this action has been taken with British and American support, and still more in the spectacle of half Europe conforming to France's lead. When even Italy joined the movement, leaving Germany isolated in its attitude, M. Blum's stock rose further; and if his action in reducing the height of tariffs and the number of quotas becomes effective in loosening the icebound markets, not only France but Europe will have reason to be thankful to him. One thing in any case is sure; M. Blum's action has drawn England and France closer together, without alienating Italy; and to that extent he has defeated Herr Hitler's main object.

Only seven years ago there was a sort of war in Palestine, involving the employment of British Navy, Army, and Air Force; and I have been looking up the account

**The Riddle  
of Palestine**

of it in a book which studies typical examples of such minor operations—*Imperial Policing*—written by a very competent military authority. The writer's conclusion is that in 1929 the British mandatory power invited trouble by reducing its forces beyond prudence in a sphere where trouble must always be expected. Two mutually hostile religious communities have there to be kept from flying at each other's throats. This, however, is a commonplace of British rule in India; and in some cases the stronger or more determined faction, when hindered from throttling the underdog, will fly



at the intervening Power, as happened in the Moplah Rebellion of 1921, described in the same book. That did not happen in the Palestine troubles of 1929; all that the troops had to repress was a series of attacks on Jews; but this year matters were very different. The Arab revolt was a revolt against English rule in the name of nationalism. It has only been checked by the belated despatch of a full division and by the proclamation of martial law. But how stable order is to be created, seems an insoluble problem, for the reason that the mandatory Power has to administer irreconcilable principles, and can hardly be regarded as impartial. It has a mandate over the people of Palestine, and for many centuries Palestine has been an Arab country. Yet to every Englishman Palestine is Jewry. The less educated he is, the more guided by tradition and instinct, the more instinctively it seems fair to him that the Jews, if they wish it, ought to get back to their own country, and own their own land.

No other early history, not even the history of England, is so present to the average Englishman as the history of the Jews in Palestine; and every educated Arab must feel that the scales are weighted against his national cause when the control of Palestine is given not only to a Christian Power but to England. Two nationalisms are in conflict: one of them maintained through the history and religion of a race which for nearly two thousand years has maintained its racial distinctness, remote from its native soil and scattered through every aggregation of civilized humanity. As compared with that, the Arab national claim on Palestine must seem to many almost trivial and accidental.

I do not see how in the face of this widespread natural sympathy with an ideal nationalism (apart from all question of pledges or of political advantage) England can surrender her mandate. And if the will of Jews everywhere is to make Palestine once more into Jewry, it will be very hard to resist. They are entitled to say that they can make the soil of Palestine fruitful as the Arabs have never done, and can even improve the conditions of life for the Arabs and multiply rather than lessen their numbers in the land. Yet to the Arab nationalist this is no answer: and when nationalism is backed by the hatred of one creed for another, it is a dangerous explosive—I doubt if we shall see the garrison of Palestine safely reduced.

In Ireland Mr. de Valera is said to be ready to re-model the Free State's constitution. He will probably put into words so far as he can the existing *de facto* situation, under which the Governor General is the shadow of a name, and Ireland's association with Great Britain, all but in name, external. The truth is that nobody in Ireland, except Mr. de Valera, cares much for these fine shades, and many desire agreement with England; but if he were to come to any agreement which acquiesced in the partition of Ireland, he would lose his power, which at present is very complete. Early in autumn two elections were held, each caused by the death of a supporter of Mr. Cosgrave, and in both constituencies Mr. de Valera's men won easily, though in each case a "Republican" candidate was put up to split the vote. Yet about the same time, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Mr. Alfred Byrne, standing for re-election, was opposed by the de Valera party and won decisively: not because he belonged to the Cosgrave side, but on his personal popularity. Probably, also, because it was felt that he kept the Lord Mayor's office outside politics. In the same way, Mr. de Valera is personally liked and respected and the Irish public at large thinks that Ireland is quieter under his rule than it was under Mr. Cosgrave.

**Mr. de Valera's  
Power**

It is worth noting that Mr. de Valera very soon after taking office was faced with violent contests between a party of Blue Shirts, who used only sticks, and the I.R.A. who carried revolvers. He began by proclaiming the Blue Shirts, just as M. Blum proclaimed the *Croix de Feu*, and it seemed dangerously unfair. Matters were made easier by indiscretions of the Blue Shirt Leader, which Colonel de la Rocque seems to be avoiding. Yet early this summer a shrewd Irishman, outside party politics, said to me that Mr. de Valera seemed likely to put down the I.R.A., that nobody else could do; and that if he did it he would atone for all else that he had done. And in fact at the present moment most leaders of that private army are under lock and key and their supporters, putting forward candidates at the poll, get a mere handful of votes. So, as I hold, Mr. de Valera can go ahead. A Commission appointed to enquire into the possibilities of finding a new Second Chamber is said to be

reporting in favour of one with merely consultative powers, or at most of imposing a few months' delay. But whatever he proposes will be submitted to.

Readers of the *Fortnightly* who had the first sight of Mr. Charles Morgan's brilliant *Epitaph* on George Moore may have been disappointed that another writer was called in to be Moore's official biographer. Yet **George Moore's Biography** I am far from sharing this regret. Mr. Morgan's appreciation stands to express the mind of those highly-cultured English men of letters by whom Moore's work was most highly valued—those who were born when Moore was already an established writer, but before Irish influence began to assert itself strongly in his work. The results of that influence on Moore were so notable and so fantastic that I doubt whether anyone not familiar with the Dublin group of Moore's Irish period could have traced them out so easily and surely as Mr. Hone has done. Almost any English writer would have felt obliged to ascertain and to explain what, for instance, Sir Horace Plunkett, A.E., Douglas Hyde, and Oliver Gogarty signified in the life of Dublin; Mr. Hone, who has been part of that life, takes this for granted, and the presentment of his central figure stands out the more clearly. Moore grows in the book through all his eighty years; the man is there; and there also is the extraordinary evolution of the artist. This fastidious writer, perhaps the most fastidious of modern writers, was in the literal sense almost illiterate. He brought no trained sense of the shaping of words to the use of them. He knew French and used it as an artist, yet he could not write three sentences without blunders that would disgrace an English schoolboy. He might never have seen a page of French written: yet, read out what he has set down, and it is competent French. There, perhaps, one gets at the secret of his excellence. This writer was never a reader, and the profit on it is, he composed by the ear and not, as almost all of us lapse into doing, by the eye. Every sentence that he wrote, when he wrote at his best, has the quality of an individual voice speaking. Later, to my mind, he compromised this excellence—which is at its highest in *Hail and Farewell*—by a false theory of style. This artist was theory-ridden; but whatever he wrote, in any



of his manners, earlier or later, he heard the sentence, and was not content to set it down in black and white. The voice was there.

Biography must show the man as well as the artist, and Mr. Hone does not flatter his subject any more than did the many painters who have left portraits of Moore. He loved company, and the book shows to all who did not know it already that many men and women of high quality were delighted to be his companions. Especially painters; one whose name is not well known outside Ireland (because he died when his work had hardly begun to be widely valued) was Walter Osborne—a man as unlike Moore as could be imagined, and of the type to dislike exceedingly all that was slimy and pawing in Moore's attitude to sex. But this did not affect Moore's talk of painters and of the art which he loved none the less though he gave it up as a bad job—to find success in another for which he had apparently even less qualifications. No man ever worked harder; and he made sacrifices: some of them sacrifices which a man ought not to have made. His masterpiece, *Hail and Farewell*, lost him two friends who lay nearest to whatever heart he had—Edward Martyn and his own brother. "If you really wanted to know if I should object, it would have been as easy to show me what you had written about me as any other parts of the book; and if you examine your conscience you will find that however reluctant you may or may not have been to annoy me, you were not prepared to sacrifice your little paragraphs on the altar of friendship," Colonel Moore wrote.

But indeed it is hard to see how a break was to be avoided between George Moore and men who were passionately in earnest over ideas which he took up with passing enthusiasm. In ideas he was never more than a dabbler. Religion and love were themes about which he buzzed like a bluebottle, and yet the man was never dangerously in love, and never felt the strong hold of religion. His quarrel with Ireland was that it took too seriously the morality which deters from easy love, and the religion which is austere in its dogma. Perhaps also he resented it that nobody in Ireland would take him seriously, knowing him not to be serious. The revolt which mattered has come from men in whom it was evident that Catholic religion had a grip

on their very heartstrings. Joyce was the first, and his *Ulysses* was prohibited by English, not by Irish, administration.

But at present censorship in Ireland is being strained to breaking point. Mr. Sean O'Faolain, whose talent is familiar to readers of this Review, is a member of the Irish Academy of Letters. His first book, *Midsummer Madness*, was banned from Irish circulation, and now his third novel, *Bird Alone*, has incurred the same ban. The Board of Censors does not represent only Irish Catholic opinion, but possibly the Protestant element on it may feel difficulty in advocating the publication of what offends their Catholic colleagues. Yet that is pushing intolerance too far. This powerful, moving and admirably-written story represents many phases of revolt (willing and unwilling) against Catholic discipline and against ordinary moral discipline ; but it is written with passionate sincerity, it is clean and honest, and educated devout Catholics are, to my knowledge, as unable as the ordinary man of letters to understand why it should be denied a hearing in the country of its origin. *Bird Alone* in every chapter of it is testimony to the strength of religion in all Irish life, but especially in family life. If it attacks anything, it is that family dread of a lapse from respectability, overmastering all humane feeling, which turns the book into a tragedy at its close.

# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## FIFTY YEARS OF BRITISH HISTORY

By WICKHAM STEED.

**GREAT BRITAIN, EMPIRE AND COMMONWEALTH, 1866-1935**, by J. A. Spender. Cassell. 10s. 6d.

MR. J. A. SPENDER is one of the fast dwindling band of public men and writers who have lived and worked through the past half-century with a single eye to the understanding of national and international affairs. Almost from the moment when he "went down" from Balliol, with high classical honours, he chose journalism as his craft and, after editing the *Eastern Morning News* at Hull from 1886 to 1890, became assistant-editor of the old *Liberal Pall Mall Gazette* and thereafter assistant-editor and editor of the *Westminster Gazette* for nearly 30 years. Thus he acquired what may be called a "public outlook" from the start. He has kept it into a ripe age that is not yet old. It shines through the more than 800 pages of text in this valuable volume which old and young may read with pleasure and profit, and future historians will be bound to consult.

Contemporary witness to historical processes and events is important in more ways than one. Notwithstanding his diligent study of "documents," Mr. Spender's reading of them cannot fail to have been influenced by the personal and confidential intercourse he enjoyed with many of the actors in the dramas which he records. He knew Grey, Haldane, Asquith, Campbell-Bannerman and many another British

statesman intimately. Indeed, they often sought his advice and welcomed his support. He knew also outstanding diplomatists in the pre-war and post-war eras; and some foreign statesmen. As he says: "For one who has been occupied as a political journalist with the events of the period dealt with, memory supplies an unescapable background, and memory is sometimes charged with a bias which it would be idle to conceal. I have not tried to conceal it, but I have tried to supply the reader with facts and considerations which may enable him to form his own judgments when he differs from mine."

This is the right way to deal with recent or contemporary history. Readers and students know where they are. My own bias is not precisely the same as Mr. Spender's; and, had I been trying to cover any considerable part of the ground he covers, with the help of the same "documents," some of my judgments might have differed from his. But, surely, it will be more profitable for those who in future may survey this ground to know how things struck an honest witness of them than to be obliged to rely solely upon "documents" which, for all their official character, may be neither honest nor authoritative.

Mr. Spender has therefore done good and dutiful work. Nobody needs to be told that he can write, though few may know how close he stood to the heart of many a plot which he unravels. From



the "Home Rule" election of 1886—which I remember well—to the Ireland of De Valera, and from the foreign policy of Salisbury to that of Sir Samuel Hoare, he weaves an unbroken tissue of informed narrative of which the design and execution alike reveal a master's hand. Nor has he forgotten the social and economic sides of his story. The J. A. Spender to whom, as a youth, I listened at Toynbee Hall 46 years ago when he lectured on Old Age Pensions under the chairmanship of Charles Booth, would not have been true to type had he omitted from this volume what he calls "A Commentary" upon Labour and Economics before and after the War, upon the Departure from Free Trade and upon the Age of Planning. Just as little could he have left out his chapters on Egypt and the Middle East, on the British Commonwealth and on India, for of these matters he has special knowledge.

Such criticism as I have to offer touches comparatively minor points. Mr. Spender seems not to know that it was the first Haldane mission to Berlin in 1906—when, as he says, "the Kaiser paid him (Haldane) special attention and permitted him to study the great German military machine"—that inspired Haldane to reform the British army and to create the British Expeditionary Force. It was then that Haldane first understood the German design to

strike at the French Channel ports through Belgium. On this point I hold the written evidence of Haldane himself. But, in referring to Haldane's later mission to Berlin in 1912, Mr. Spender falls into the error of saying that Haldane "talked German fluently." Haldane may have read German without great difficulty, but he talked it like an English schoolboy who has had a few lessons in German grammar.

On many weightier matters Mr. Spender's testimony is invaluable. "In spite of all that has been said about 'secret diplomacy,'" he writes, "it is difficult for the student of post-war revelations to put his finger upon any fact, unknown at the time, which had any material result upon the course of events. The forces at work were large and visible, and with the material at his disposal any reasonably well-informed man in these years was as much entitled as the Foreign Secretary to form a judgment upon their probable issues." The secrets of Europe were very open ones in those days. The only trouble was that so many British Ministers and public men would not take the trouble to learn them, and were consequently astonished when things took the course they were bound to take.

For years before the War, as Mr. Spender shows, Germany was eager to get a British undertaking to be neutral in a European conflict. When she thought British neutrality probable, if not certain, she let Austria-Hungary loose—indeed, she urged her—to start the Great War. This was the measure of German "war guilt;" and the measure of British "war guilt" was the failure of Grey and his colleagues to make it plain in time that Great Britain could not and would not be neutral.

May the British share of this sad history never repeat itself!

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## SOUTH AFRICA

By PROFESSOR CHARLES MANNING

THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. Vol. VIII. South Africa. Cambridge University Press. 42s.

IN the present year, the centenary of the beginning, on a big scale, of the Great Trek—that being “still the central event in South Africa’s history”—it is particularly opportune that this, the last “Dominion” volume of the Cambridge British Empire series, should have come into the student’s hands. Compared with the contents the title is perhaps over-modest. “South Africa” here is not the Union only: it comprises all territory south of the Zambesi. And the term “British Empire” seems even less restrictively understood: chapters appear, advantageously, from the annals of the Portuguese, and German, Empires. On Africa in ancient and mediæval times there is an erudite section. And the narrative proper opens, not with the first coming to Capetown of the British in 1795, but earlier, with the founding of the Cape Colony, by the Dutch East India Company, in 1652.

That events may be viewed in something of their authentic setting, we begin with chapters, one on the geography, the second on those indigenous peoples who, till confronted with the whites, had filled, or at any rate frequented, big sections at least of the scene.

The editors may rejoice at their success in what may well have been an anxious undertaking. In choosing their

contributors they have spread the net out wide. Extremists, one would infer, will not have been wanted. This is not a pamphlet, but a history, and a Cambridge history, for all its many chapters by alumni of “the other place.” The South African universities too, as the editors particularly insist, are all in some sense represented. A special tribute is paid by them to Professor Eric Walker, their Advisor in South Africa. It is easily conceived that the burden falling in such conditions upon an advanced headquarters is likely to have been considerable. It has not, however, hindered Professor Walker from himself producing three of the ablest, and most important, chapters in the book. These will be welcomed as rounding off well the twenty-five strenuous years he has given to South African learning. May the Cambridge chair that he henceforth adorns prove not inimical to his continued interest in the Cape.

Another contributor who nowadays, after some service in Capetown, is back at work in England is Arnold Plant, Professor of Commerce at the London School of Economics. Into fifty pages he has condensed an excellent account of the economic development of the sub-continent since the inception of British rule. A parallel chapter on the development of culture is by Dr. Leipoldt, who reviews, with temperate optimism, the condition and prospects of Afrikaans literature. Culture, a vague enough term, is treated as embracing religious, but

apparently not also recreational, interests.

Other chapters standing like these a little aside from the main stream of the story include that by Professor Mandelbrote on the terms and working of the Act of Union; another, by a Supreme Court judge, on the system of Roman Dutch law; and, by a social anthropologist, a chapter on the effects of European contacts on native tribal life.

South Africa is not one of those countries whose happiness may be said to come of their having no history. There was, indeed, in the eighteenth century, a placid phase: and one ought not to miss the chapters, by the eminent bearers of two French Huguenot names, on the period of Dutch Company rule; they have an interest of their own. But, the British once having arrived . . . ! History—social, political, constitutional, military—enough and to spare. By 1907, we find, the Germans in "South West" had fought, in twenty-four years, "88 engagements against the Hereros and 295 against the Namaquas." Would someone point contrastingly to the merits of *pax Britannica*? *Pax*? These last fourteen years, from 1922, happen to represent the longest single respite there has been from actual fighting, within what now is Union territory, since about 1775.

A chronicle then of human wickedness? Not especially. The second van der Stel was certainly rather acquisitive: but his "goose," as he observed, was "cooked" in 1706. Otherwise South Africa has been served on the whole by worthy men, caring much for what to them were worthy causes. A record then of blunders? In retrospect, largely, yes. Now it is the "imperial factor," now the man on the spot. Sometimes the right policy is applied in a wrong manner; sometimes alternative policies are in effect pursued at once. But the volume is little concerned in the placing of

blame. Only in Mr. MacMillan's pages, on the eighteen-twenties and 'thirties, Dr. John Philip of the London Missionary Society being the central figure, is the note of partisanship sometimes faintly discerned. But he keeps to rigorous understatement. Besides, just look at the facts!

Here, as in his full-dress study, Professor Walker's realistic vision of the Trek is not, at bottom, unsympathetic: even the sentimentalists must see it is fair. The war of '99, its antecedents and outcome, are similarly safe with him. Later, he writes on South Africa and the Empire.

Many readers probably will go first for the section on the Raid. "The account in the text is based on the statements of some of those most intimately concerned, whose evidence is yet unpublished." Unhappily, the writer, Mr. Cecil Headlam, has not lived to see the work in print. Of Sir George Cory and Professor John Ewing this also is true. Their sections concern respectively the 1820 settlers and the Union's role in the War.

Then the bibliography, which fills a hundred pages, being the joint achievement of Mr. A. Taylor Milne and Mr. A. C. G. Lloyd. It seems beyond praise. The index, without being perfect, is good.

It is normal and proper no doubt in a series such as this that there be an avoidance of any condescension to the needs of the casual reader. The maps, for instance, show only the distribution of vegetation, rainfall and warmth. The contributors too, though shortly identified, are not informatively introduced.

Yet the layman who gets to thumbing these pages may soon come under their spell. Though for pathos, and romance, the bare facts of the story should mostly be left to speak for themselves, this, as it happens, they do.



## ADMIRAL JELlicoe

By

HECTOR C. BYWATER

THE LIFE OF JOHN RUSHWORTH  
EARL JELlicoe, by Admiral  
Sir Reginald Bacon. *Cassell.* 25s.

IF "what really happened" at Trafalgar was still a subject of hot debate a century afterwards, it was hardly to be expected that the infinitely more complex panorama of Jutland, shrouded as it is in sea mist and battle smoke, should already be presented in a form to satisfy the many who were concerned in the production. Controversy still rages, and will long continue to rage, about the tactics of Jellicoe, Beatty, Scheer and Hipper on May 31, 1916. Was Jellicoe right in deploying the battlefleet on the port division instead of on the starboard wing? Should not he have turned towards, rather than away from, the German destroyers when they launched their attack to cover the retreat of their main body? Were his night dispositions calculated to impede or to facilitate the escape of the High Sea Fleet? And, finally, was the "fleet in being" doctrine of static strategy practised by Jellicoe, with the full support of the Admiralty of that day, fundamentally sound or the reverse? These and other pertinent questions have yet to be answered with complete assurance, but Admiral Bacon's biography of Earl Jellicoe should help to elucidate many points which have hitherto remained obscure. His obvious veneration for his lifelong friend may not be conducive to complete impartiality, though it must in fairness be added that in almost every case he advances solid reasons for his conclusions. Including the appendices his book runs

to nearly 500 pages, only fifty of which are devoted to the Jutland action. It is, in fact, a well-balanced work that covers the whole of Jellicoe's career, from cradle to grave. The professional matter is enlivened by human touches and domestic interludes which reveal Jellicoe as he was alike in public and in private life, a man of innate kindliness, steadfast loyalty and iron resolution.

Despite his great services in the war—and his biographer does not exaggerate their magnitude—his reputation suffered partial eclipse during the early years of peace in consequence of the violent attacks to which he was subjected, mainly by self-constituted authorities. He was charged not only with having missed through excessive caution a golden opportunity of destroying the German High Sea Fleet and thereby shortening the war, but with bungling the anti-submarine campaign in 1917 by his apparent opposition to the convoy system, and even with personal responsibility for the technical shortcomings of the Grand Fleet, particularly in its gunnery equipment, which were so painfully manifested at Jutland. Certain of these charges appeared to the lay public to be substantiated by that singularly ill-advised official document, the "Jutland Narrative," which was inspired by his most influential critics. Jellicoe bore these attacks with outward equanimity, though to one of his sensitive nature they must have caused grievous hurt. Only once, when goaded by the "Jutland Narrative's" thinly-veiled animadversions on the conduct of him-

self and his immediate subordinates, did he deign to reply, and even then he contented himself with pressing for the inclusion of emendations and footnotes challenging the Admiralty's version of certain incidents in the action.

But the fates were working on his side. The vehemence of his critics recoiled on their own heads, for the innate British love of fair play produced a strong popular reaction in Jellicoe's favour, and, what was more important, encouraged unbiased historians to explore more thoroughly the moves and counter-moves at Jutland. This examination did much to re-establish his reputation in the eyes of the world. As Mr. Reginald McKenna justly observes in a foreword to the book, "his fame as the years go by is enhanced by every new fact which the research of the historian brings to light." The flight of time has not only tempered the natural disappointment which was felt when the country was robbed of a second Trafalgar, but has brought a shrewder appreciation of the motives which constrained Jellicoe to avoid close action off the Jutland Bank. On the whole it was, perhaps, well for Britain and her allies that the Grand Fleet in 1916 was commanded by an admiral to whom personal glory meant little and the welfare of his country everything. A single error of judgment, still more an

impulse of foolhardiness, might have shipwrecked the Allied cause in an hour. Cautious his tactics may have been; nevertheless their effect was to convince Germany's naval chiefs that a second fleet encounter must be avoided at all costs. Strategically, therefore, Jutland was a decisive British victory, even though the tactical honours in the first half of the battle—at which Jellicoe was not present—may have rested with Germany.

Less than a year after Jutland the unrestricted U-boat campaign had entered on its most deadly phase, threatening us with a complete breakdown of communications and therefore with defeat. It was Jellicoe's task, as First Sea Lord, to cope with this insidious menace. His biographer has no difficulty in showing that the measures initiated by Jellicoe at this period were, as they matured, chiefly responsible for the eventual checkmating of the U-boat offensive. It fell to others to reap the fruits of his labours at the Admiralty, labours of which he was brusquely relieved in circumstances which did little credit to the other protagonists concerned. In his years of retirement he committed to paper many of his war-time experiences, and these documents, which were not published during his lifetime, enable his biographer to present Jellicoe's own version of his relations with political colleagues, including Mr. Winston Churchill and Sir Eric Geddes. But his observations, though often pungent and even piquant, are never spiteful, for it was not in his nature to harbour malice. Admiral Bacon's work is as interesting as it is historically important. Though it may not silence the voice of criticism, the new material it contains exhibits many of Jellicoe's decisions and actions in a new light. The volume should thus enable historians of the future to form a juster estimate of one who already stands revealed as a great captain and a great patriot.

## THE DECEMBER ISSUE

will contain  
special Reviews of  
**CHILDREN'S BOOKS**  
and  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**GIFT BOOKS**

## SALUTE TO JOHN TAYLOR

BY GERALD BULLETT

**KEATS'S PUBLISHER : A MEMOIR  
OF JOHN TAYLOR (1781-1864).**  
by Edmund Blunden. *Cape*. 8s. 6d.

It was a happy thought on the part of Mr. Blunden to spend time and labour in redeeming the personality of John Taylor from its virtual oblivion. Celebrated authors have seldom lacked a memorial, but the publishers of celebrated authors have had something less than their due. This book may perhaps be regarded as the first instalment, offered to publishers on behalf of authors in general, of a debt long outstanding. John Taylor, with his partner Hessey, was the publisher not only of Keats, but of the poet Clare, of Cary's translation of Dante, and for a time of Landor; as proprietors during four brilliant years of the *London Magazine*, he and Hessey were intimately associated with the work of such men as Lamb, Hood, Darley, De Quincey, and Hazlitt. Taylor represented the literary or editorial part of the firm's activities, and Hessey attended to the business details. Both men had begun as booksellers' assistants, and Taylor was a bookseller's son. The picture of him that emerges from Mr. Blunden's quiet, careful, well-documented narrative is that of a man of intelligence, literary discrimination, common sense, and generous idealism. He had a genuine enthusiasm for literature, and a kindness of heart which he did not hesitate to indulge at the expense of his pocket. The story of his firm's dealings with Keats, whose genius he was quick to recognize, presents him in a most engaging light; and his relationship with Clare stands equally to his credit. We can smile, it is true,

at his itch for meddling with his author's texts, and especially at his desire that Keats should purge his pages of indelicacy; but this kind of thing, which must have seemed reasonable enough at the time, proceeded from no lack of humility, nor yet from timidity. He was always the ardent champion of Keats against his detractors, and he could point a shaft as well as the next man. When he met Mr. Blackwood, in whose periodical Keats had been so savagely attacked, he blandly inquired: "Mr. Blackwood, why should not the Manners of Gentlemen continue to regulate their Conduct when they are writing as much as when they are in Conversation?" And, when Blackwood defended the critiques, "I told him," writes Taylor in a letter to his father, "that the cold-blooded Threat that they would take Care he should never get £50 for another Poem, was made in the Spirit of the Devil. In a little Time he took his Departure evidently cooler than he entered."

Even if this were all we could know of John Taylor, he would still be entitled to our respect and affection. But Mr. Blunden, from heaven knows what dusty archives, has unearthed much more, and nothing to his subject's discredit. Taylor and Hessey's encouragement of John Clare, the "inspired ploughman" (as Mr. Blunden, his editor, calls him), seems typical of their pleasant informal way of going to work. There is little doubt that Taylor could always recognize good poetry when he saw it, and he was not to be put off by the risk of losing money on his discoveries. It is easy, remarks Mr. Blunden, to see how greatly Taylor



must have enjoyed the discovery of Clare, whose verses were first brought to his notice by Edward Drury, a bookseller in business at Stamford. He was interested "as a lover of poetry, as a Midlander, as an editor (Clare's work needed adjustments), as a philologist (it was sown with provincialisms), and as a publisher in search of substantial novelty." He made haste to secure the poems themselves and material for a biographical sketch that should whet the public appetite.

On November 12th, 1819, Taylor and Hessey "pledged themselves to Octavius Gilchrist and other friends of Clare to give £100 to Clare, whether the Work succeeded or not." On the last day of that month they volunteered to act as his advisers "without Emoluments or Advantage, on all future Occasions, let who would be his Publishers." The attitude was in keeping with Taylor's faith that publishing was no mere profit and loss account.

In justice to present-day publishers, Mr. Blunden reminds us that these were the days, however, when even poetry was, or could be, a paying proposition.

In a memorable sentence, which time has invested with sublime irony, Keats wrote his own epitaph: "Here lies one whose Name was writ on Water." But we perhaps owe it to the sensibility of John Taylor that these words were in fact inscribed on the tombstone, and without comment or embellishment; for we find him writing to the designer, quoting the epitaph, and adding: "It is very simple and affecting, and tells so much of the Story that none need be told. Neither Name nor Date is requisite." Keats's poetry was not in the fashion when Taylor first encountered it, and Keats himself was by some accounted an eccentric figure. But "Taylor was quite clear that as a lover of poetry he had only one course." The decision, says Mr. Blunden, "was quietly made, but it sounds on in the history of literature." To that history, this book has added a fascinating footnote.

**VOLTAIRE**, by Alfred Noyes. *Sheed & Ward. 12s. 6d.*

THIS is a long book: yet how, if not amply, is the whole life to be recounted of a man who was, in Lamartine's phrase, "a living cycle, a century incarnate?" But it is consistently interesting, not only because of the extraordinary variety of ideas, adventures, conflicts, destructions and creations which filled the eighty-four years of Voltaire's life, but because Mr. Noyes has an affectionate understanding of his subject which convinces one of the justness of his portraiture, and leaves one satisfied that here, at least, is a biographer who will not be tempted into caricature. Mr. Noyes has told the story of Voltaire's life and presented a survey of his thought, from a Catholic standpoint. And this is something which needed doing. Voltaire was made and moulded by a civilization of Catholic colour and texture; he lived the whole of his long life in an age whose problems were rooted in political as well as philosophical aspects of Catholicism. He was not a believer in the orthodox sense; but he was not a Protestant, and still less was he the silly, sniggering atheist who passed into the rationalistic mythology of the nineteenth century. Mr. Noyes has done well to restore a historical as well as a personal perspective into the portraiture of a great man who was also, in the simple words of his old friend d'Argental, "a good man."

Under the restoration in France, there grew up a trick of mind amongst the survivors of the *ancien régime* and their juniors of attributing all the evils of a difficult age to the destructive influence of the eighteenth-century philosophers. So much so, that a doggerel refrain used to mock these self-excusers:

*S'il tombe dans le ruisseau  
C'est la faute de Rousseau:  
Et si le voilà par terre  
C'est la faute de Voltaire!*

it this was far from being the only distortion of Voltaire's place in history. Amongst others has been the constant assumption by nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers (in England especially) that Voltaire angrily and despairingly rejected the idea of a God-made and God-ruled universe. This is a very superficial view, resting partly on *a priori* interpretations and partly on inadequate knowledge of the texts. In the course of his biography, Mr. Noyes examines with much care and textual precision the true nature of Voltaire's religious views. He disposes very effectively, for instance, of Morley's inductions from the famous poem on the Lisbon earthquake of 1755: "unlike aascal he can find no solution [wrote Morley] . . . and confesses his belief that no answer is to be found by human effort. Whatever side we take, we can only shudder: there is nothing that we know, nothing that we have to fear." This is clearly a travesty of Voltaire's personality, of the turn of his mind. And Mr. Noyes, simply by reading in its entirety the poem which Morley, to point his argument, quotes only up to one page in its development, is able to throw a very different light on Voltaire's position in a crucial matter.

But simply as the story of an amazing life, this new biography is to be recommended. Occasionally the author labours a point, but others he makes very neatly. The quality of gaiety in Voltaire's personality is clearly one which has made its appeal to Mr. Noyes; and he understands, unlike many writers, that a marriage of gaiety and profound seriousness in one mind is not a suspect notion.

During those last days of his life, Benjamin Franklin brought his young grandson to M. de Villette's house that he might say he had seen Voltaire. The old man raised a hand and said to the boy: "*Mon enfant—Dieu, et liberté. Souvenez-vous de ces deux mots.*"

They still reverberate; and to grasp what they meant to Voltaire is to appreciate the value that they still have today.

HAMISH MILES.

**THE COLUMBIA ENCYCLOPEDIA**, compiled and edited at Columbia University. Clarke F. Anstey, editor-in-chief. *Harvaph.* 63s.

READERS of English are not well provided with one-volume encyclopædias, and the wide use made in this country of volumes like the *Petit Larousse* might well suggest that our publishers have rather neglected an opportunity. The purpose of such publications is, of course, strictly utilitarian. No one who turns to this volume for a reference will be beguiled into browsing over a biography or a scientific article which strikes his eye on the same page. His object, in the editor's phrase, will be to seek first aid in his reading; not to obtain a comprehensive summary of modern knowledge on the subject which has engaged his interest. Consequently the articles, which are roughly equal in number to those of the twenty-four volumes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, are brief, concise and packed with facts. But they bear the evidence of careful and scholarly work, as might indeed be expected from a book compiled and edited at Columbia University. Though it is produced in America, there is no perceptible American bias in the length and number of its articles. That on the United States, for example, is allotted seven columns, but the component parts of the United Kingdom get nine, and France and Italy each six. The articles deal with events as late as the spring of 1935, and the book thus forms a useful supplement to the more elaborate and expensive works bought for a lifetime which as the years pass develop an inconvenient habit in a rapidly moving world of being found to be out of date.

H. R. W.



**THROUGH THE WOODS**, by H. E. Bates. With 73 Engravings on Wood by Agnes Miller Parker. *Gollancz*. 10s. 6d.

THERE are one or two things that might spoil Mr. Bates's chance of being the best of all companions through the woods. His hostility to gamekeepers is one. He has had trouble with these intolerable obstructors before now, and seems likely to have more with any others he meets in future. Then, his objection to "the troops of riders that call themselves the hunt and the platoons of baggy trousers that call themselves the shoot" is unmistakable. He says some things about these people in print which, were they uttered direct to any of them, might be the cause of much alarming controversy. So long as keepers and the chase do not cross the path, one may very willingly accept Mr. Bates's invitation into the English woods.

In the past, most of the writers on this flourishing subject maintained a cautious balance between the enjoyments of the senses and of the imagination, and the useful knowledge associated with the forest tree. A pause beneath some exemplary beech would yield, certainly, some comments on the stateliness, fantastic columns, radiant leaf-splendours and so on of the specimen; but we should not be allowed to proceed without some instruction in the utility of its wood to cabinet-makers, or the custom of "the lower classes in Silesia" of extracting a substitute for butter from beech mast. Mr. Bates comes to his woods with little concern about such base uses. The only craftsman in the neighbourhood who holds his attention for any length of time is the poacher. The wood-cutter just appears, and only just, in his sylvan year.

For he perceives the woods, throughout the seasons, as spiritual and beautiful assemblies—these woods, at least, which are not "preserved." He approaches them with a religious exaltation, as if he were allowed to draw near to a

harmony of angels. Tree and under-woods, birds and flowers, mossy ways and trilling brooks, wild bees and silverweeds, sunshafts and shadiness—all in their collation make up for him an exceeding loveliness, which his writing communicates with much eloquence and intimacy. "Whatever is" in his wood, with the exceptions noted, "is right," is the eternal blessing of those with eyes to see and ears to hear, and commands the tribute of rich and choice words. It is not only the blossomed branches, nor the full-mantled trees, which he so glories in; witness the following fragment of a prose hymn to the fungi—

We gathered boleti that were like sponge-cakes; greenish olive yellow underneath, or faint rose, or creamy white. The infants returned triumphant with scarcely visible infantile parasols of old-maidish dingy mauve or brown. We found many little clavaria of mauve and pink and white, like sea-coral, small branching stems of almost untouchable delicacy. And everywhere silk-gilled parasols of sepia and cream and pigeon-grey and stone-colour; and suddenly some rarer, quite dazzling specimens in orange or scarlet or crimson or purple, big and gaudy; and rarer still some yellow-bellied thing, something of slimy, lizardish green or a strange, too pure sinister white.

It must be allowed that these fungi lure Mr. Bates on into the circle of naturalists: dead and gone, for when he comes to the fly-agaric, he informs us that it "is said to be eaten in Russia, though extremely poisonous."

Qualified critics of wood-engraving will estimate the examples by Miss Parker which plentifully illustrate Mr. Bates's text. A layman, after marvelling at the diligent delicacy of the process, can only add that Bewick would have praised some of them for bold truth and movement, and might have thought the tailpiece of a bottle of whisky and some tumblers an instance of "British is best."

EDMUND BLUNDEN.



THE ENGLISH THEATRE, by Allardyce Nicoll. Thomas Nelson. 6s.

THEATRE is now a word of such varied signification that the prospective reader may well ask himself—is this a book about the drama, the art of stage presentation, or the physical playhouse? Those who already know Professor Nicoll's writings will consider his name on the title-page to be a sufficient answer. The book must be about all three of these things. Almost alone among professorial writers on the theatre he apprehends the stage process with its close interdependence of playwright, director, actor and architect. He is even sympathetic to the idea of the theatre theatrical, which many moderns believe to be emerging from the theatre of naturalism as the past two or three generations have known it. The conventions of the past, so far from absorbing his interest as a pure historian, impress him as impulses of renewal in our living theatre and drama. When the most influential of our dramatic critics, discussing the production of *Ædipus Rex* at Covent Garden, declares that "this is the age of the picture stage, and even if you are twelve German producers rolled into one, you cannot put the clock back," Professor Nicoll has every right to smile. For his knowledge of the matter is derived from learning and sensibility, not from an instinct to have a go at "the Reinhardt gang," who have "never realized that to venture one inch beyond the proscenium arch destroys the whole illusion so laboriously created." Words like these come very ill from Englishmen who inherit a great drama created on a platform stage and developed on the later apron stage. We need books like this to answer them.

Professor Nicoll has written better things than *The English Theatre*, which is frankly an expansion and reconstruction of a smaller work some years old, *The English Stage*. In the historical

—MACMILLAN—

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(All prices are net)

—MACMILLAN—

chapters the proportion is well kept, and the illustrations are apt and amusing. A lengthy chapter on "The Modern Period" should be either a well-documented summary of facts or an adequate account of the ideas underlying the new theatre movement. The chapter, as written, falls most lamentably between the two stools. Yale University, where the author is now Professor of History of the Drama, deserves better information of happenings on the English stage within living memory. The general reader, who will not in any case regard this book as a primer, deserves to learn more accurately what the moderns desire, and how they have tried to employ the existing architectural theatre for their

ends. We are past the stage when a few tributes to Adolphe Appia and Edward Gordon Craig will meet the case. It is necessary to know just where the modern theatre movement is going, and why.

One or two instances will serve to show how much is lacking in this respect. Every student of English twentieth-century drama knows how important to its development were the influences of the Incorporated Stage Society and the Vedrenne-Barker management at the Royal Court Theatre. The Stage Society, founded in 1899, brought a number of plays by Ibsen for the first time on to the English stage, and produced the early works of Shaw. The Vedrenne-Barker management, a few years later, made Shaw a dramatic success and placed Granville-Barker, St. John Hankin, Galsworthy and others among the ranks of playwrights. The only allusion made to the Stage Society in this book appears to be the curious statement: "The Stage Society (and, for a time, the Phoenix Society) periodically brought sixteenth and seventeenth century plays before the attention of the public." No one would guess from this that the Phoenix (never called the Phoenix Society) was a post-War offshoot of the Stage Society, which had already flourished for twenty years and had never produced any sixteenth or seventeenth century plays until the War, when it discovered *The Recruiting Officer* to be topical. Nor is the allusion to the Vedrenne-Barker management any happier, for it reads, "Even Granville-Barker's effort at the Court, brilliant as his productions must have been, did not result in any real profit." And to come to the present day, the Mercury Theatre is described as a "subscription house" and classified with the Gate Theatre Studio and Arts Theatre Club, although it has been licensed as an ordinary public theatre since 1933, indeed, since the name of Mercury was taken.

ASHLEY DUKES.

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**FOUNTAINS OF YOUTH: THE LIFE OF MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF,**  
by Dormer Creston. *Butterworth.* 15s.

THE first publication of the diary of Marie Bashkirtseff in 1887, three years after her death, made a sensation. Mr. Gladstone, who even in his old age had keen literary perceptions, and who was unexpectedly susceptible to Russian exuberance, wrote an article in a monthly magazine in which he described the diary as "a book without parallel." So, in the eighteen-eighties, it was. The names of Tolstoy and Turgenev were just beginning to be known in literary circles in France and Great Britain. Hardly anyone had heard of Dostoevsky; and the introspective self-indulgent outpourings of frustrated souls characteristic of the later romantic period in Russia were undreamed of by the sober burghers of the Western democracies. The diary of Marie Bashkirtseff can now be matched by half a dozen other such documents from Russian hands (not counting more recent foreign imitations). But in Western Europe it was first in the field; and this fact has sufficed to give this precocious Russian girl, as Miss Creston puts it, "her own page in the literary catalogue at the British Museum, her own paragraph in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*."

The quality which carried the first readers of the diary off their feet was, in Miss Creston's words, its "unabashed self-revelation." Marie Bashkirtseff cannot indeed compete in this respect with the more modern literary ladies who have laid bare their souls to the world. But her diary remains a striking illustration of the extent to which this "unabashed self-revelation" is identifiable with self-absorption. The reader is interested in her because she is so intensely interested in herself. There is no other basis for the interest her diary excited and can still excite. Marie Bashkirtseff painted some creditable pictures, of which the most famous,

reproduced in this volume, is in the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris. Painting was the only occupation which ever took her out of herself; but it was not this which has kept her name alive. She will survive, if she survives at all, as the supreme egoist.

From the age of twelve, when she began to keep her diary, to the age of twenty-four, when she died, Marie Bashkirtseff's governing passion was to impose her personality on those around her. Primarily, no doubt, on those of the other sex. "Every hour passed except those spent in coquetry (for coquetry leads to love and love, possibly, to marriage)," she wrote, "is like a weight on my head." But here she does herself some injustice. Although she comments on her own "avidity to remark the ravages one has caused," Marie is not by any means exclusively engrossed in her absurd and inconclusive love affairs. Equally characteristic are her attempts to force herself on the notice of King Victor Emmanuel, Alexandre Dumas, Maupassant and Edmond Goncourt; and the most charming of her pen portraits is of Constantin Bashkirtseff, her good-for-nothing, elusive father, whom (rather than the mother who "will do everything I want") she must certainly have resembled.

Miss Creston notes that no previous biography of her heroine has appeared in English. She does not observe that there is an excellent reason for this omission, namely, that all we know, or want to know, about Marie Bashkirtseff is in the diary, and that nobody can tell it better than Marie has told it herself. Miss Creston repeats large chunks of the diary in her own words; and her own contributions are, to put it mildly, not illuminating. Constantin Bashkirtseff kept nine cannons in the courtyard of his Russian country-house, and every now and then, in a fit of high spirits, would let them all off. "Aural sadism?"



speculates Miss Creston, and continues : "The noise the guns made was gorgeous—nine colossal, shattering bangs, slamming into the far-stretching quiet of the country, and then, after the ninth and final bang, complete silence . . . eerie . . . profound. . . ." If Miss Creston had spared us these dotted profundities and given us a handy little volume of selections from the diary itself, Marie Bashkirtseff's memory would have been better served.

E. H. CARR.

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**THE SCHOOL OF NIGHT**, by M. C. Bradbrook. *Cambs. Univ. Press.* 6s.

**SIR PHILIP SIDNEY**, by C. Henry Warren. *Nelson.* 7s. 6d.

**ELIZABETHAN SEAMEN**, by Douglas Bell. *Longmans.* 12s. 6d.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, chafing at the inaction of the court of the Virgin Queen, had, deeds being forbidden, to content himself with literature. Elizabeth was too selfishly fond of him to let him out of her sight to "get knocked on the head, as that inconsiderate fellow Sidney was." The comment is a revelation of the Elizabethan mind. Her scheme of things hardly included epic deaths at Zutphen to light posterity. Above all she was practical; supremely unsentimental. It is this in her which provokes to fury or admiration according to one's temperament. And Sidney's death was a loss without, as far as she was concerned, any counterbalancing gain. She might have saved him for poetry; she may have saved Raleigh.

The contradiction in the spirit of that age, the desire at once for action and contemplation, for buccaneering and poetry, has been sufficiently remarked on and even philosophized over, though it leads, none the less, to a lack of appreciation in this. An epoch which distrusts versatility above all things is unlikely to understand one where versatility was the norm. Those who most

appreciate Raleigh the poet are least likely to approve of Raleigh the pirate. They should buy Miss Bradbrook's book, whose sub-title is "a study in the literary relationships of Sir Walter Raleigh," and eschew Mr. Bell's which is a re-telling (and not a particularly good one at that) of the exploits of the Elizabethan seamen. Those whose tastes are the reverse should reverse the process—but with this critical warning, that whereas Mr. Bell's book, though competent enough, is not outstanding even of its kind (no original authorities have been consulted, apparently, and it is difficult to know to what audience the book is addressed), Miss Bradbrook's essay is a masterly contribution to criticism, brilliantly written, which no student of the period ought to miss.

But the devotees both of action and of contemplation should be interested in Mr. Warren's new and intimate life of Sidney, for the author's thesis is that it was precisely this conflict between the desire for retirement and the will to action which gave Sidney that strength of personality which makes him the pattern of the age.

One may disagree with Mr. Warren's thesis without in any way disparaging his excellent exposition of it. To some it is still an open question as to whether this conflict between two sides of nature—in Sidney or in any other Elizabethan—was anything like as powerful as later commentators have made it seem; whether, indeed, it and the versatility it implies are not still the norm. Sidney, undoubtedly, wanted to get away from court intrigues; but he wanted to escape quite as much (or, indeed, more), so that he might colonize America, as that he might write at Wilton. But Mr. Warren is a poet; and he will have his Sidney "a poet first and last and by virtue of a rare integrity . . . and only in the light of this acknowledgment can his life be adequately understood, whether as courtier or soldier or

ambassador." He admits, indeed, that Philip's profession was ever action rather than art. Nothing that he wrote was intended for publication," but finds, nevertheless, that "the best of his sonnets have no equal outside Shakespeare for the directness of their expression of the sorrows and joys of love." And if this book did nothing else it would be useful as focussing attention once more on that poetry and helping to reverse the more generally accepted judgment that "despite his poetic enthusiasm and passionate idealism, there is scarcely a sonnet in the famous sequence which does not illustrate an alacrity in sinking."

H. ROSS WILLIAMSON.

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AUDUBON, by Constance Rourke.  
*Harv.* 12s. 6d.

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON, about 1785-1851, is certainly the most romantic figure in early ornithology, and the new biography by Constance Rourke is a welcome addition to the literature of an artist-naturalist about whom British nature-lovers are, for the most part, curiously ignorant. The book is much more than a résumé of what has already been written of the wanderings of this somewhat eccentric American in search of material for his drawing table. Though Audubon was primarily a naturalist and woodsman, he was many other things besides. He was in turn a merchant, land speculator, book-keeper, taxidermist, portrait painter, teacher of music and dancing master; but, whatever his avowed vocation, much of his time was devoted to watching and drawing birds and, in a lesser degree, insects, reptiles and mammals. From early boyhood until his death he always had drawings on which he was working. Having seen a bird he was restless and dissatisfied until a coloured drawing of it had been completed. The present version of his life bears some resemblance

to a boy's adventure story of the old-fashioned sort. There is hardly a page but holds a thrill, for Audubon had a genius for becoming embroiled in physical risks and hazards.

Audubon is best known by his great work on the birds of North America. He first determined to complete this immense task when thirty-five years of age. At this time he was all but penniless, but financial problems never bothered him for long; he always had unshakable faith in the future. Five years later, having completed over four hundred drawings, he sailed for England with the object of winning recognition and arranging for the publication of his work. On reaching Liverpool he soon made many friends and during the succeeding years was received and encouraged by several notables of the day. Among them were Sir Walter Scott, Christopher North (John Wilson, the editor of *Blackwood's* and himself a keen naturalist) with whom he established a close friendship, and Thomas Bewick, the wood-engraver and author of *British Birds*. Bewick was then a very old man, but expressed the greatest admiration for Audubon's work. "When Audubon spoke Bewick would take off his cotton cap and pull up his socks, but on went the cap again, or almost on, as he himself picked up the conversation, and the socks would then resume their downward tendency."

In this biography no attempt is made to canonize its subject. Audubon is shown as a curious mixture of a patient student and a man who never lost his zest for practical jokes and masquerading. His attitude towards Nature is clearly shown. He was no sentimentalist. Throughout his life he was a hunter who killed as many birds as any Indian. For years most of his drawings were made from newly-killed subjects, though later, whenever possible, he drew from living birds.

The author, writing with infectious



enthusiasm, gives a thoughtful study of a peculiarly engaging personality. Besides providing a clear and living portrait of Audubon, the man and artist, the book contains many vivid impressions of the North American country of a century ago; glimpses of a vast wilderness peopled by immense flocks of little-known birds which have since been exiled by the invasion of their erstwhile haunts by man and his buildings. Miss Rourke is at pains to convince us that Audubon's scientific knowledge and conscience were wider and more sensitive than has usually been admitted. Certainly his contemporary detractors are here presented in a sinister light. During his life he undoubtedly received less than his due and his shortcomings as an ornithologist were much exaggerated by critics like John Neal and Harrison Hall in America and Waterton in Britain. It was his misfortune constantly to be compared with Alexander Wilson, the official father of American ornithology, but, in fact, the work of the two was as far apart as the temperaments of the men were dissimilar. The dour, embittered Wilson was a naturalist of the old school; laboriously industrious, systematic and unimaginative; whereas the vivacious, ever-optimistic, impish Audubon was essentially an artist, hungry for the intimacy of nature, innocent of any touch with tradition. A certain obscurity surrounds the circumstances of Audubon's birth and Miss Rourke sponsors the belief that he was, in truth, the lost Dauphin, the son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. It is an interesting theory, but the evidence brought in its support is far from convincing.

The twelve coloured plates contained in the book are beautifully reproduced and furnish excellent examples of Audubon's delightful water-colour and pastel-work.

E. FITCH DAGLISH.

**THE SWAN OF LICHFIELD :** being a Selection from the Correspondence of Anna Seward. Edited by Hesketh Pearson. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12s. 6d.

SEVERAL attempts have been made in the last thirty years to revivify Anna Seward, though with little hope that the swan will sing again. It is not merely the change of literary fashion that has silenced her; Miss Seward's elaborate diction and bombastic faith in her literary excellence could never satisfy more than her own limited coterie of admirers. She believed her work destined for posterity, but the finest tribute it ever received, or is likely ever to receive, was Dr. Johnson's praise of her "Elegy on Captain Cook." Yet this confident poetess, who aired emphatic and usually wrong-headed opinions on literature and politics, had a cordial dislike of the "bear" Johnson. His old age was perhaps insensitive to her charms. Her intellect would have been far more deeply wounded by Leigh Hunt had she foreseen his terse pronouncement, written many years after her death: "Miss Seward ought to have married, and had a person superior to herself for her husband. She would have lost her affection; doubled her good things. . . . Meanwhile, it is something too much to hear her talk of translating an Ode of Horace 'while her hair is dressing.'" There is some cruelty in this matrimonial advice to one who conceived so many attachments to men and was prevented by their sentiment and circumstance from marrying any of them.

Whether or not on that account, the lady of massive dignity preserved her effusive affection for male, female and canine friend alike; she continued without a tremor to fabricate heroic poetry; she penned and copied those sumptuous letters which were to be (in the words of her will) "worth the future attention of the public"; and the bubble of her Lichfield reputation went un-



pricked, so far as she was aware herself. In 1809 the *Gentleman's Magazine* announced the death of "the justly celebrated Mrs. Seward," though it could not, in the obituary notice, acquit her poetry of the charge of affectation. Certainly Miss Seward was, and is, a mighty figure, if we allow that literary merit is not the only criterion. Before her superb certainty a modest critic might well stand abashed. The work of Anna Seward had to live; so she chose Walter Scott, who privately detested her verse, as literary executor, and left her letters, ready transcribed and edited, to a publisher, schooling him carefully on his method of procedure.

How has her literary fame been attended to since then? Scott did his duty, writing a shrewdly non-committal preface to her poems and early letters. Of the later correspondence, from the year 1784 when Miss Seward began transcribing it, six volumes appeared, but not before Scott had gone through the manuscript striking out all that did not please. A number of letters of earlier date to the Rev. T. S. Walley were published with his journals in 1863. Then there is silence until 1907, when Mr. E. V. Lucas's *Swan and Her Friends* mischievously ruffled the august feathers, making gay reading out of a subject he professed to find unreadable. The centenary monograph by A. Martin would have been more to Miss Seward's taste, though even this lacks adjectival splendour. In 1931 her American biographer, Margaret Ashmun, found her worthy of respectful research and filled some details into the familiar outline of her *Singing Swan*. Now comes Mr. Hesketh Pearson, who seems to have set himself an easy task. The letters he reprints are selected from the three obvious sources: those published by Scott with the Poetical Works, Dr. Walley's Journals, and the six volumes of correspondence. A brief biography introduces them to the general reader,

who may then enjoy Miss Seward's lofty sentiments without being troubled by any signs of editorial scholarship or original research. Some small inquiries might have been undertaken. Where, for instance (if not destroyed), are the hyperbolic or controversial passages Scott struck out? What of the unpublished letters from November, 1807, to Anna's death, now owned, Miss Ashmun tells us, by the Bishop of Ely? However, Mr. Pearson's aim is not to be exhaustive but to avoid exhausting his readers. This is no book of reference nor—alas! for the poor poetess—a book of reverence. The public are expressly invited to treat Anna with ridicule. But, lest he be charged with a disrespect equal to Boswell's, Hunt's, and Lucas's, Mr. Pearson has sought to smooth the ruffled feathers with this fairer reason for Miss Seward's "partial restoration": "she was an honest and courageous human being." The epitaph, signed "Posterity," might be written on her tomb—if Mr. Pearson would find out for us whether she was buried in the choir with her family, or, in accordance with her second suggestion, in the grave of her much-lamented singer, Mr. Saville.

SYLVA NORMAN.

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**STANLEY BALDWIN: MAN OR MIRACLE?** by Bechhofer Roberts, "Ephesian." *Robert Hale*. 12s. 6d.

THERE is room for a biography of Mr. Baldwin. He lacks the intellectual stature of Asquith, the clever ingenuity and light-hearted gaiety of Lloyd George, the steady vision of Ramsay MacDonald, who—to say the least—has done more for India than any other Prime Minister. Mr. Baldwin came into prominence in a Cabinet noted for "second-class" brains. "Second-class" brains were in demand. When the moribund Bonar Law resigned, Mr. Baldwin was preferred to Lord Curzon. England was momentarily tired of her Lloyd Georges, her Birken-

heads, her Winston Churchills. The war had exhausted her. She needed a long period of quiet and recuperation. Mr. Baldwin made an admirable Prime Minister twelve years ago. Twelve years ago his significance was understood.

Since then Mr. Baldwin has transformed, if not destroyed, party politics. He entered into an alliance with the leading figure in the Labour Cabinet, leaving the Labour Party leaderless and dispirited. He has so fashioned one National administration after another—whether or not he was the actual Prime Minister—that the Conservative Party itself has felt leaderless and dispirited. Seldom in the past five years has the Government had to fear serious Parliamentary opposition. Parliament itself, like party politics, has been unwittingly transformed. The man chiefly responsible for these changes is the Prime Minister. He has today a significance which none could have anticipated twelve years ago. Hence the need for a new biography.

Unhappily, Mr. Bechhofer Roberts's book does not supply this need. We are told that his biography of F. E. Smith "set a fashion in modern biographies" and we know well what that fashion happens to be—to conceive a contempt for the subject of the biography; to ridicule his ancestry and social pretensions; to emphasize the meannesses which can be discerned in every individual; to quote from the dullest speeches and the dullest letters; to recall unhappy phrases; to belittle, to sneer and to mock. It is a fashion which cannot be commended. It is a fashion which Mr. Bechhofer Roberts did not even set—for, surely, the fashion began with T. P. O'Connor's tiresome biography of Disraeli—and it so happens that the standard of political biography has actually improved within recent years.

Lord Rothermere and Lord Beaverbrook figure prominently in the pages of Mr. Roberts's book. They have tried for more than twelve years to dislodge Mr.

Baldwin from political leadership. Does Mr. Roberts—"Ephesian," he once called himself—imagine that a contemptuous biography will succeed where contemptuous newspaper articles have failed? If other Ephesians are like him it is as well that they never troubled to reply to St. Paul's Epistle.

J. R. GLORNEY BOLTON.

ALL THE DOGS OF MY LIFE, by Elizabeth. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

SOME of us who discourse so readily on the charms and intelligence of our own dogs and listen with but a show of interest to those of our friends may be tempted to approach *All the Dogs of my Life* with a certain mental reservation. But the author (who still shelters behind the anonymity of "Elizabeth") is far too wise to bore us with the unvaried charms of her fourteen dogs and indeed can view some of them with almost unnatural detachment: Ingulf, for instance, who never learned to smile, and Pincer, poor Pincer, whose twin lovers were his mistress and his dinner, and whose obesity called forth the derision of errand boys and the tart remark from the author, "Indeed that was all Pincer ever wanted besides his dinner; that I should be by his side while he snored. Which annoyed me, for after all he wasn't a husband."

Apart from Coco, the Swiss sheepdog, whose sense of protection for his mistress led him to welcome prospective husbands (and consequent guardians) with almost embarrassing delight, it was her family of fox terriers that figure most largely in the book and demand more attention than their sizes warrant.

How the author managed to struggle with her literary work and the combined assaults of her adopted family only Elizabeth and the accompanying snapshots in her book can explain.

M. M.



**NEW WRITING**, edited by John Lehmann. *Bodley Head*. 6s.

**365 DAYS**, edited by Kay Boyle, Laurence Vail and Nina Conarain. *Cape*. 7s. 6d.

**THE WIND BLOWS OVER**, by Walter de la Mare. *Faber & Faber*. 7s. 6d.

THE purpose behind both *New Writing* and *365 Days* is much the same; the results, on the other hand, entirely different. Mr. John Lehmann and the editors of *365 Days* really aim to present a commentary, imaginative, critical or reported, on the contemporary scene. The editors, who are nothing if not earnest, describe how they invited all kinds of writers, during 1934, to send in "stories that dealt with or reflected the conditions, spiritual or factual, of that year." Mr. Lehmann is content merely with the sensible announcement that "*New Writing* is devoted to imaginative writing," though it is plain from the work he prints that it is contemporary life, in particular its political and social conflicts, which interests him most. This similarity of ideas is, as I say, in marked contrast to the results achieved in the two books. Having deliberately given every writer a foot rule and having said in effect, "No story must be a line longer than that," Miss Boyle and her friends must not be surprised if, here and there, to one reader and another, their 365 stories appear more or less like 365 plates, or matchsticks, or bricks, piled on top of each other. Odd though it may sound, 365 stories all of one page each can be very hard to read and even very boring to read. It is easy to get the impression, too, since these stories are not signed but merely dated, that they are the work of one man doing more or less the same trick, with a more or less different handkerchief, over and over again. Actually there are over a hundred authors here, and some very good authors—Mrs. Whitaker, Mr. Calder Marshall, Mr. William Saroyan, Mr. William March—among them. But none are quite seen at their best.

No doubt it was all very hard work and very great fun for the editors, but the outlet it offers to authors is not, really, worth talking about. Whereas Mr. Lehmann offers an outlet of very considerable importance to all those prose writers who, because they write too well, too honestly, too bitterly, too imaginatively or too lengthily, cannot place their work with conventionalized editors. Such an outlet was never more needed. The outspoken or imaginative author has, today, about as much chance of getting into the average editorial fortresses as a convict has of getting out of Parkhurst; and my only criticism of *New Writing* is that its appearances are absurdly infrequent. Such a book—in reality a periodical in disguise—ought to appear at least quarterly or, better still, monthly, though it is, I should say, in the hands of the public and not Mr. Lehmann that the means of effecting such a change exists. *New Writing* deserves the most generous support. No other periodical in this country can point, in one issue, to such an army of talent as appears here. Mr. V. S. Pritchett, Mr. Leslie Halward, Mr. Ralph Bates, Ignazio Silone, Louis Gouilloux, Mr. W. H. Auden and others, all contribute first-rate stuff; and Mr. Lehmann gets full marks for courage and enterprise.

Mr. de la Mare has, by rights, no place in such an article as this. His prose, though as fresh as paint, is not new writing; he has no commentary to make on the conditions, spiritual or factual, of the contemporary scene; he belongs to no sort of school of thought and has, in fact, never founded one. His work is the fruit rather than the seed of art. In *The Wind Blows Over* it remains of absolutely first quality: ripe, delicious, aromatic, a little mysterious, the product of a magical crossing between the world of fact and the world of dreams.

H. E. BATES.



**HENRY AIRBUBBLE**, by W. J. Turner.

*Dent.* 7s. 6d.

**THE FRIENDLY TREE**, by C. Day

*Lewis. Cape.* 8s. 6d.

**FOSTER GIRL**, by John Metcalfe.

*Constable.* 8s. 6d.

GOOD poets do not necessarily write good novels: Mr. Turner is an exception. His *Henry Airbubble* (the second volume of a trilogy—or is it tetralogy?) is delightfully perverse, gay, personal, poetic. Mr. Day Lewis's novel, on the other hand, seems to me sentimental and commonplace, and only an occasional image reminds us that he has written some of the best poetry of recent years. A comparison between the two books—quite apart from merit—would be unfair, for the first is autobiographical fantasy, with touches of Sterne and *Erewhon*, while the second is a realistic and somewhat didactic picture of adolescence. Nevertheless, speculating why one should be so good and the other (comparatively) so bad, I suggest several general reasons. (1) Poets rarely create characters in the novelist's sense of the word, their experience being intense and not diffused; Mr. Turner takes the bull by the horns, writes in the first person, and lets his characters flicker past like a cinematograph. (2) The autobiography of a man who has reached middle age (Mr. Turner) is likely to be more interesting than the autobiography of a young man (Mr. Lewis). (3) The fictional tendency of almost every poet is to create a legend about himself. Mr. Turner goes for this rapturously, while Mr. Lewis is still afraid of giving himself away, and puts a hero—a lifeless prig—in his place. *Henry Airbubble*, in short, is a genuinely personal and—for all its fantasy—direct utterance. *The Friendly Tree* might have been written by many other people than Mr. Day Lewis, and written better.

The contents of *Henry Airbubble*, in

*Search for a Circumference to his Breath*, I find it impossible to indicate in a short review. There is the charming episode, near the beginning, of the tight-rope lady—a superb Rubensesque figure—living in Bayswater, whom Henry watches at cart-wheels in her drawing-room and worships as a donkey might a mare—but she rejects him for a middle-aged blonde German. Henry travels—and most of the book is a mixture of visions and travel—Italy, Germany, and France: vivid impressions of cities and landscapes, recognizable yet curiously generalized, are interrupted by dreams, abrupt digressions and addresses to the reader. The method is wildly whimsical, and those who prefer sober narrative will find it unendurable; but it is a rare kind of whimsy—dry, light, humorous and rhapsodical, which can be passionate as well as diverting.

The theme of *The Friendly Tree* is the difficulty of falling naturally in love. Mr. Day Lewis makes his characters choose between life and convention, love and repression, and the Lawrentian moral is administered with a rap over the knuckles. The book contains sensitive passages, but it gives a general effect of stiffness, chiefly due to self-consciousness and the desire of the author to moralize about experiences from which he is insufficiently detached.

Mr. John Metcalfe's immensely long *Foster Girl* gives an extraordinary picture of the London underworld: dirty, dim streets at night, Soho "caffs" and tarts' lodgings in Baker Street, orphanages, cemeteries, and the Embankment. The detail of the book is fascinating, and its bulk is kept together by the growing horror of the story, as its heroine, beginning with bastardy, moves through poverty and intermittent prostitution towards an early death. *Foster Girl* is an unwieldy lump of writing, but in my opinion a genuine achievement.

G. W. STONIER.



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## THE GREAT WALL OF HADRIAN IN ROMAN TIMES PAUL BROWN

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## TO FORTUNE'S PIPING E. THORNTON COOK

Author of "They Lived—A Bronte novel," &c., &c.

This is a book with unusual features and will make a strong appeal to the many thousands who are interested in love, life, art, and literature, for it tells of the lives of two Australian girls who came seeking Fame and Fortune in London, one as an actress, the other as a free-lance writer.

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## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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Again **Denis W. Brogan** writes on the subject of his special study, American government and politics. Between terms at Oxford he has been paying another visit to the United States, where in the midst of the election fever he was mainly occupied in talking politics and renewing contacts with the politically influential.

**Stephen Leacock** has taken a specialist's interest in the strange experiment in Alberta. He was for long head of the Department of Political Economy at McGill University, Montreal, and though the wider public, in England at any rate, know him rather as a humorous writer, he has been publishing books on political science for thirty years.

**Philip Carr** has been the Paris correspondent of the *Observer* since 1922. Like his father, R. Comyns Carr, the well-known playwright and theatrical producer at the turn of the century, he has always taken a keen interest in the theatre. Before he went to live in Paris in 1913 he ran the Royalty Theatre and Queen Street Theatre, besides being joint editor with J. L. Hammond of the *Speaker*. In Paris along with his political work for the *Observer* he has continued the family tradition by doing a certain amount of dramatic criticism for English and American journals.

The history of early man in Britain was the subject of what is probably **H. J. Massingham's** best known book, *Downland Man*.

The Mr. Jorkens of **Lord Dunsany's** story is a figure not unfamiliar to the readers who delight in that author's impish wit. **Jan Struther's** story was,

of course, written before the troublous times which have since fallen upon the Balearics.

**Elizabeth Wiskemann**, who is a coach in modern history at Newnham has just returned from an investigation in the Balkans, from Vienna to Bucharest. Her persistent habit of inquiry on the spot into European conditions led to a brush with the Gestapo authorities in Berlin earlier this year, but after an unpleasant hour or two's cross-examination about an article she had written in the *New Statesman* she was released.

**Geoffrey Gorer's** article arises out of a visit he paid to America last year to do research work in anthropology. Besides the book he mentions, *Africa Dances*, a recent publication of his was *Bali and Angkor*.

**George Orwell's** somewhat unusual career is suggested by the title of his book *Down and Out in Paris and London*. He is at present working on his new book, *On the Road to Wigan Pier*, a comprehensive study of the distressed areas of Yorkshire and Lancashire.

**Romilly John**, seventh son of Augustus John, came into notice a year or two since by an autobiography of charming originality, *The Seventh Child*. He has recently spent six months in Sweden with his wife, and they are collaborating in a book about their adventures.

**Professor Manning**, who writes in the book review section, is a South African Rhodes Scholar and a professor at the London School of Economics.